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FOR THE NEW YEAR

BY WENDELL L. WILLKIE

I RECENTLY received a letter from a friend of mine down in Mississippi; and he was complaining at the outcome of the election. He said that if every county in the United States had shown the same percentage of increase for the Republican candidate his county did, 'you would have been overwhelmingly elected. In 1936, the Republican candidate in this county received two votes. In 1940,' he said, 'you received three.'

I am glad to be in any gathering of American fraternity men, because the fraternal spirit, after all, in America is a functioning of the democratic process. In the college fraternities of America, in the lodges of more mature life, men and boys learn how to discuss without acrimony, to reform without vindictiveness, and to live with each other in peace and accord for the accomplishment of a unified purpose.

And I care greatly about public discussion in America. The democratic process rests upon discussion. There is

no other method by which it can function. And it will function satisfactorily and effectively in such a time as this only if the channels of public discussion are kept completely open. And, may I say also, not alone kept open, but kept free from personal abuse and vilification.

In the recent campaign, as in all other campaigns, men and women on both sides abandoned dispassionate discussion, and some of them engaged in pure vilification and personal abuse.

I call your attention to this at this time because, as one of the principal participants in that campaign, much interested in the outcome, and as one who has since analyzed the election results in Monday-morning quarterback activity, I am firmly and completely convinced that such lines of argument on both sides of the fence did not change any votes on either side of the fence. Their only result was to lower in stature and in the estimation of the American people those men and women — whether of high position in public life or in other forms of endeavor — who hurled the abuse.

The reason I speak of it now while it is fresh in your minds is that thereby I

At the Thirty-second Annual Dinner of the National Interfraternity Conference, Mr. Willkie delivered an extemporaneous speech so pertinent that we take pleasure in reprinting it here as a New Year's resolution. — THE EDITORS

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hope to contribute something to the constant raising of the level of public discussion in America. For if we continue the process that has been so prevalent in these United States in the past several years, of destroying by such methods those men whom democracy calls upon to lead it, we shall begin the destruction of democracy itself.

Over and above that, the effect of such campaigning, such public discussion, — and I would warn each side alike, — will make it impossible for democracy to call to public leadership its ablest and its best men. Under such form of attack men shrink from performing their services in public life; and of all times in the history of democracy, this is the time when we should be able to say to any man, no matter how great his ability or how high his standard, 'You must contribute to the discussion of public issues in America. We need your leadership.'

So I would destroy, if I could, those deterrents such as personal vilification that keep such men from aspiring to that leadership.

I believe that democracy now faces the most serious test in all of its long and magnificent history. It is the only system of government — and may I say a free-enterprise system of economics is inevitably connected with it — that has given a man hope, opportunity for achievement and for aspiration toward a fuller life. And that system of economics and that system of government are at the test point in the world's history. America within the next few years must make some very fearful and some very fateful decisions. And it is my earnest hope that in arriving at the conclusions with reference to such questions the finest type of American discussion may take place, so that democracy, functioning as it should function, will arrive at conclusions that will preserve this system for us.

The question that America has to face now and the decisions that it

must make are not of the ordinary type. They are decisions that will determine whether or not democracy shall survive.

If you trace the history of democracy you will find that it always collapses and disappears under bankruptcy or long-continued economic depression. And America in the next few years must determine its fiscal policy. It must determine whether or not we shall pile debt on top of debt; whether we shall increase the national indebtedness to such a point that inflation will come, or the backs of the people be broken with excessive taxation.

Now the discussion of such an important question, which does not primarily involve dollars, but involves the lives, the opportunities, and the hopes of millions of Americans, should not concern itself with the personal lives of the men who seek to lead us. I care not whether the man who leads me in the struggle for what I believe in is engaged in business, politics, or agriculture, so long as the cause he advocates is advocated with ability, knowledge, and understanding.

And likewise America faces another fateful decision. I happen to be of the school of thought which has believed and which still believes that we must continue at an ever-increasing rate to help the fighting men of Britain to preserve that rim of freedom which is gradually shrinking, and which, if we permit it to continue to shrink, will shrink to the edges of our own shores. I believe it is as necessary for America to give that aid to Britain as to build armaments for itself.

And yet I say that in a democracy where men believe otherwise, where men believe that the United States should preserve itself solely from within, such a difference of opinion presents an honest issue which must be determined by the American people after full, free discussion.

It does no good to say that the man who believes we must send help to that rim of freedom is a warmonger, or that

the man who believes America should protect itself solely within these shores is a fifth-columnist or a Nazi or a Fascist, or something else. Such characterizations, such mere words do not help this great, free people in this difficult time to arrive at just, proper, and wise decisions. My faith in democracy is such that I believe the collective judgment of the people, after listening to the arguments and the discussion on both sides, may be wiser and better than the judgment of those, whoever they may be on either side of the question, who think that the wisest course of discussion is to destroy their opponent rather than to answer his arguments.

That is the same process by which adolescents, when running out of arguments, begin to make faces at each other instead of continuing the discussion.

And so I ask you to join in elevating the level of American public discussion so that America may play its true part

in this historic and all-determining time in the world's history. I ask this because America, being the one remaining great democracy, being the one country where liberty still survives, must show the world, not alone by precept but by example, that democracy is not only the most pleasant way of life, but also the most effective way of life. We must so lead the world in the next few years that peace again will come — not the peace of appeasement, but a peace in which democracy shall survive, in which the trade routes of the world shall once again be opened, because the birds of commerce carry with them the seeds of democracy, of peace, and of individual opportunity.

I thank you very much for your generous treatment here tonight, and in conclusion I should like to ask all of you to rise while we drink to the health and to the happiness of the President of the United States.

NURSE DEATH AND MY FATHER

BY MARGARET McGOVERN

COME, says Nurse Death,
'Tis time for bed,
So put away your toys
And pull the covers round your head,
Like other girls and boys.

Of course ye don't want candlelight —
Such a good child as you!
The moon and stars are out tonight —
And something shinier, too.

Nay, nay, lie down, I will not speak,
That was the final warning.
I'll fold your hands and smooth your cheek —
And tell ye in the morning. . . .

HITLER'S ALTERNATIVES

Is He a Prisoner of Conquest?

BY WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN

LESS than ten months after the beginning of the war, Hitler was master of a land empire of Napoleonic proportions. He had struck down every enemy on the continent of Europe. On the other hand, six months of intensified air and submarine war after the fall of France have failed to conquer the island stronghold of Britain.

What are Hitler's present alternatives? Can he settle down, accept an indefinite stalemate in his struggle with England, and build up a powerful self-contained economic unit out of Germany and the lands which he has incorporated or will incorporate in his 'new European order'? Or is he rather a prisoner of his own conquests, obliged by the exigencies of the situation to go on or go under? I believe the second hypothesis is the correct one. A prolonged standstill for the Nazi dictator would be equivalent to a defeat.

I

Napoleon shattered the old order in Europe with the double weapon of his own military genius and the intoxicating ideas of the French Revolution. At the height of his power, after Austerlitz and Jena, he had come closer to the realization of the ideal of a Europe united under a single sway than anyone else until Hitler in our own time. Indeed there is an amazing similarity between Napo-

leon's position at the full tide of his success and Hitler's today.

Like Hitler, Napoleon had broken or reduced to the status of a satellite ally or minor power every country on the continent except Russia, with which he maintained relations of ambiguous friendship, not unlike those of Hitler and Stalin today, after the Peace of Tilsit. Like Hitler, he sought to break the British blockade with his own counter-blockade, to organize a European *Lebensraum* that could exist despite British mastery of the sea.

The three main causes of Napoleon's collapse were the unrelenting pressure of the British blockade, the fiasco of the invasion of Russia, and the nationalist revolts which flamed up in Spain and in Germany. Hitler must face very similar problems, but against a very different technological background, which gives him some advantages and some disadvantages.

In the airplane and the submarine, Hitler possesses means of striking England directly which Napoleon lacked. No young Englishman or Englishwoman now could be so happily oblivious of the war as the heroes and heroines of Jane Austen's novels of Napoleonic times.

Russia's distances would not present such formidable obstacles as was the case in 1812. When the Grande Armée commenced its ill-fated march to Moscow there was not a railway line to ease

the problem of supply and transportation. Napoleon did not possess the trucks and tanks which Hitler could send sweeping across the Russian steppes if his policy should demand an invasion of that country. And rebellion against a foreign conqueror, as against a domestic dictator, is extremely difficult in the age of the airplane and the tank.

Not all the trump cards, however, are in Hitler's hands, if one compares his position with Napoleon's. The agricultural America of four million settlers, from which Napoleon had nothing to fear, has become a people of one hundred and thirty millions, the strongest industrial power in the world, which is already making an important contribution to Great Britain's power of resistance. The British Empire itself is a far greater asset, a much richer reservoir of men and materials, than it was in the days of the Pitts.

Strategic minerals, fuels, and fats are much more important for Hitler than for Napoleon, because modern warfare is so highly industrialized. And here Great Britain, so long as it retains command of the seas, possesses a definite advantage in potential resources which are being gradually brought into play, although Hitler has converted a much larger portion of his more limited resources into actual war material.

II

After the fall of Napoleon a century elapsed before a power appeared, in Germany, strong enough to try to unite Europe by force. Yet the idea of European unity was not altogether lost. The Holy Alliance was an attempt to substitute federation, on a reactionary basis, for domination by a single power. It broke down, as coalitions usually do, when the shock and panic of the Napoleonic spectre had subsided and the maintenance of the status quo, the ideal of the Holy Alliance, had proved to be impracticable.

At the other extreme from Metternich, the soul of the Holy Alliance, was the Italian revolutionary and dreamer, Mazzini. To Metternich's project of European solidarity, expressed in a league of absolute monarchs, Mazzini opposed the ideal of a federation of free European peoples. Neither of these aims was realized. Nationalism proved stronger as a force for division than as a force for union. Such cultural solidarity as Europe possessed during the nineteenth century received a terrific blow in the World War and its aftermath, the totalitarian revolutions in Russia, Italy, and Germany.

Yet even after the war the Pan-European ideal continued to appear in the most varied places. It was a favorite idea of the recently murdered revolutionary, Leon Trotsky. One of the curiosities which I turned up during research in the historical records of the Russian Revolution was a speech which Trotsky delivered to an audience of gaping peasant soldiers of the newly organized Red Army in the provincial town of Balashov during the Russian civil war. Trotsky envisaged revolutionary Germany joining hands with revolutionary Russia, then a Communist United States of Europe, which would finally send out an invincible armada to subdue the last stronghold of capitalism in the United States.

The most persistent and persuasive advocate of a liberal, non-revolutionary Pan-Europe during the post-war years was Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi. Europe, he maintained, must federate or perish. As a group of twenty-six sovereign states, divided by political feuds and separated by customs barriers, it could not, he believed, resist the military pressure or the economic competition of such huge units as the United States, the Soviet Union, and the British Empire.

During the liberal twenties some eminent statesmen, both in France and in Germany, expressed platonic sympathy

with the Pan-European idea. But the drive behind the movement was not strong enough to overcome the powerful opposing forces: national hates and rivalries, the protected vested interests which would stand to lose in the event of the creation of a European customs union, the formidable inertia which blocks the way to such a radical change in political thinking and habits. Pan-Europe, on the basis of voluntary federation, never got beyond the debating-society stage.

Side by side with Coudenhove-Kalergi's paper scheme there was the functioning international organization of the League of Nations. But it failed to supply the need for European federation. It included Asiatic and South American powers which had no direct concern with European affairs. The League, even in its most favorable period, suffered greatly from the absence of Russia, from the unhealed breach between France and Germany, from the abstention of America. The absence of the United States made it impossible to take up realistically the interrelated problems of war debts, reparations, and tariff barriers which aggravated so seriously the great crisis of 1929. This crisis in turn promoted the rise of Hitler and ended the last hopes of voluntary European federation.

Now twelve of the twenty-six states which existed in Europe before Hitler began his career of conquest have been destroyed. Several others live only on sufferance and might disappear almost overnight as a result of the thrust of a few armored divisions. Hitler is effectively sovereign (for Mussolini is distinctly the junior partner in the Axis) in an area which exceeds that of the Napoleonic Empire. He is the ruler of the expanse of territory which Coudenhove-Kalergi conceived as Pan-Europe, from which the Soviet Union was to be excluded. Even in countries where the German armies are not in physical occupation, Hitler's fiat is law. He can change Balkan boundaries at a mo-

ment's notice in the true Napoleonic style.

III

What can Hitler do with this new empire, which is larger than the Mittel-Europa of Pan-German dreams before the first World War? Given a stalemate in the military struggle, — German inability to conquer England, British inability to break Hitler's grip on the continent, — could a forcibly unified Europe, under German hegemony, become a going concern? Could there even be a rise in living standards to a point where the non-German people would forget their lost liberty?

From a cold-blooded engineering standpoint, putting aside the important sentimental and ethical considerations, there would be certain technical and economic advantages in a consolidation of Europe under German industrial leadership, *under conditions of world peace and normal access to overseas markets*. I have italicized the qualifying phrase because, as I shall presently show, it is of decisive importance. And one must add the further reservation that, unless there were a complete reversal of the Nazi attitude toward other peoples, the benefits of the new European order would accrue exclusively to Germany. There would be no cement for the scheme except force.

Germany is the most populous country in Europe, excluding Eurasian Russia. It is also the most advanced in industry and in the practical application of science. The skill of its workmen, the painstaking industry of its salesmen, the achievements of its scientific laboratories, are proverbial. The fall of many customs barriers, the inclusion of tens of millions of new producers and new customers within a single unit, would tend to expand and cheapen production.

German engineers and experts in agriculture and forestry could do a good deal in mopping up Europe's untidy Balkan back yard. Bridges, factories,

railways, and roads could be built; new crops could be introduced, and the yield of old ones increased. Such natural resources as Rumanian oil and timber and Yugoslavian copper and lead and bauxite could be more scientifically and efficiently exploited. There could be a more specialized division of production and markets between Germany's own industries and those of small countries with highly developed industries, such as Switzerland and Sweden, the Netherlands and Belgium. The natural economic alliance between Ruhr coal and Lorraine iron would be strengthened by the disappearance of customs barriers. French and Spanish agriculture, in a Pan-European scheme, would represent a natural complement to German industry.

In brief, a Europe organized under German economic leadership could be a more productive economic unit, a richer market, and a stronger competitor in world trade than the Europe of twenty-six states, big and small, which came into being after 1918. But this Europe today is physically one of the most miserable regions in the world.

France, through all vicissitudes hitherto the home of good food, is already cold and hungry and may soon be starving. The little countries with the formerly high standards of living, Denmark and Holland and Switzerland, are being subjected to privations and rationing. Very serious is the plight of Norway and Belgium, always dependent for many of their foodstuffs on overseas trade and shipping. Meatless days have become familiar in the Balkans, which, whatever else they lacked, always produced an abundance of cheap food. For Germany itself the immediate fruit of victory is a standard of living below anything known under the much abused Weimar Republic, even below that of Americans on relief, as regards quantity and quality of food and clothing.

The destruction directly attributable to war furnishes only part, and not the

most important part, of the explanation of Europe's disastrous decline in physical well-being. Europe is on grimly short rations not because of the devastation associated with Hitler's successive *Blitzkriegs* in the east, in the north, and in the west, but because it is not a workable economic unit. Hitler's present empire is hopelessly lopsided economically, oversupplied with men and machines, undersupplied with foodstuffs and essential raw materials. The part of Europe that is under Axis domination has more than double the population with less than half the area of the United States. What is still more important, its natural resources are much inferior to those of the United States.

Europe is a reasonably fertile section of the temperate zone, without deserts and jungles. But it is not self-sufficient in such basic foodstuffs as meat and fats and cereals.¹ And it is completely or largely deficient in a long list of tropical and semitropical products — in cotton, rubber, and tin, in tea and coffee, cocoa, and vegetable oils. It is very inadequately supplied with oil, with the minor and shrinking Rumanian fields and the negligible deposits in Galicia and Albania as its sole sources of natural oil. Well provided with coal and iron, the European continent (excluding Russia) is lacking in such important subsidiary metals as manganese and nickel, tungsten and antimony. Europe has been able to prosper and to support a greatly increased population during the last century by means of overseas trade and colonial development. No improvement in distribution, no chemical ingenuity can give to an isolated and blockaded Europe the possibility of a tolerable standard of living.

So, apart from the question whether tanks and airplanes and the Gestapo can permanently extinguish the nationalist

¹Europe normally imports 4,000,000 tons of wheat and rye, 5,500,000 tons of oats, barley, and corn, 1,342,000 tons of fats, and 327,000 tons of sugar. — AUTHOR

feelings of Frenchmen and Norwegians, Poles and Czechs, Danes and Dutch, it is impossible for Nazi Germany to settle down and look forward to a profitable development of its conquests. Hitler must either get much more or lose everything he has.

IV

What will be the place of France in the Europe of the future? Only by an extraordinary stroke of luck can it be more than a secondary one. The swift collapse in May and June brought home with cruel vividness to the French people themselves and to the whole world something which only a few observers had suspected: that France is no longer the realm of Richelieu, of Louis XIV, of Napoleon, no longer Europe's greatest power. The causes of France's disastrous decline in relative strength are numerous. The birth rate has long been stationary, so that there were not enough soldiers, not enough workers, not enough farmers for the modern totalitarian war. The French genius was less adaptable than the German to modern industrial technique, at a time when this technique was all-important in terms of military power. There had been a disastrous indulgence in abortive revolutionary moods and movements just when the secular enemy across the Rhine had found a remedy for defeat and economic crisis in a brutally efficient, thoroughgoing revolution.

When I left France last June, I carried away the impression of a people so stunned and shell-shocked as to be incapable of collective positive action of any kind for a long time. I could not imagine them either rising in revolt against a foreign invader or carrying out an internal revolution of any genuine vitality. Events of the last few months have confirmed this impression.

The Pétain-Laval Government came into power as a result of the manoeuvring of a few men behind the scenes in a time of unprecedented confusion, when

many millions of French people were homeless fugitives, millions more were in regions under German occupation, and normal forms of political discussion had ceased to exist. It has been handicapped at every turn by the obvious German pressure, by the desperate economic problems which it has had to face.

Yet no alternative to the Vichy régime is in sight. The average Frenchman and Frenchwoman with whom I talked during the great flight from Paris to the South were full of disgust and disillusionment about everything, about the conduct of the war, about the politicians, — a favored subject of abuse, — about the *Front Populaire*, a convenient scapegoat. The mood was overwhelmingly negative, nihilistic. I cannot recall a person who showed positive faith in fascism, in communism, in monarchism, in anything else.

What Vichy has meant for France is a mixture of old-fashioned conservatism with diluted fascism and anti-Semitism. Behind it there is no trace of the popular enthusiasm that attended the coming into power of Mussolini and Hitler. A French fascism, should it assume coherent form (and nothing jells quickly in the chaotic atmosphere of divided France), would suffer from the handicap that proved fatal to German democracy after the World War; it would be associated in the popular mind with bitter memories of military defeat, of intense suffering, of the demands of an oppressive conqueror.

However, if Germany wins, France would have no alternative except to develop its own imitative type of fascism and assume a subordinate place in the German-organized Europe. Feelers in this direction were certainly put out during the talks between Hitler and Pétain and Laval. A final settlement has apparently been retarded, if not frustrated, by two factors. There are Pétain's scruples against taking military action against England. And Hitler finds it difficult to reconcile Mussolini's

territorial claims at the expense of France with the need of the Vichy Government to show the French people a tolerable peace settlement as the reward of collaboration with Germany.

A clear-cut victory for England would be a great stroke of luck for France, just as the Allied victory over Germany in 1918 was a great stroke of luck for Russia, making possible the annulment without risk of the Brest-Litovsk Treaty. France would almost automatically regain its previous territorial frontier, if not something better. There would be a good many French Vicars of Bray in such an event, men who were anti-war until September 1939, pro-war from September until June 1940, anti-war, anti-British, and anti-Semitic while Germany seemed to be the winner, and who would turn pro-British and pro-democratic if there should be another reversal of the situation.

There is still another possibility for a partial French 'comeback.' If England halts and weakens Germany without winning a positive victory, there may be a freer play of national politics in Europe. Then there might be a chance to try out one of the favorite ideas of Pierre Laval: the creation of a Latin bloc, including France, Italy, and Spain, which would preserve a certain independence in relation both to Germany and to England. One must recognize, however, that Talleyrand at Vienna faced an easy task compared with that which now confronts the French statesman who would try to restore to his country its former place among the European powers.

The best, perhaps the only philosophy for many French men and women in this dark hour is that of an elderly French woman in whose house, in a suburb of Bordeaux, my wife and I found shelter during France's Great Flight.

'We try not to think in these times,' she said. 'We only work and pray.'

Certainly there is an immortal France that will survive all the vicissitudes of the French temporal power, a France of

luminous thought, of profound and playful tolerance, of deep skepticism and equally deep and imaginative conception of religious faith. In this immortal France, with its rich and varied strands of national culture, in the France of Notre-Dame and Chartres and the book-stalls of the Seine, of Voltaire and Anatole France, Molière and Montesquieu, Montaigne and Pascal, Renan and Balzac, many Frenchmen now find their surest sanctuary and refuge.

V

The fundamental unchangeable economic fact that is governing all Hitler's actions today is that Europe, in order to breathe and live, must have either free access to the foodstuffs and raw materials of Asia and Africa and the Americas or, at the very least, a substantial *Lebensraum* outside its own limits. So Hitler cannot stop. To do so, despite conquests that look large on the map, would be to admit defeat, to expose the Third Reich to the same fate as its predecessor: downfall through exhaustion and the slow strangulation of the blockade.

Broadly speaking, there are four means by which the German dictator may hope to extricate himself from the prison of his own conquests. The most attractive and the most decisive would be a knockout blow against the British Isles. With the fall of the directing centre in London, the British blockade could not be maintained with its present efficiency, even if there were an effort to continue the war from bases in Canada, India, and the Far East. Wavering countries all over the world, from Tokyo to Madrid, would come down on the German side of the fence. The Americas would most probably be safe against direct attack, but numerous fragments of the British and French colonial empires would fall into Hitler's hands, and his Germanized Pan-Europe would obtain its indispensable appendage of foreign sources of food and raw materials.

If the knockout blow cannot be delivered, Hitler has three other visible alternatives. One which is already being tentatively tried out, with the Italian invasion of Egypt, the attack on Greece, and German diplomatic pressure on Bulgaria and Turkey, is a thrust into the Near East. This would be an attempt to break the important link in the blockade represented by Suez and the Eastern Mediterranean. Should the attempt be successful, the Axis would enrich itself with cotton from Egypt and oil from Iraq, and the chances of effective coöperation with Japan would be enhanced.

Another means of covering Europe's deficit in food and raw materials would be to subjugate the Soviet Union. This vast Eurasian realm is a natural reservoir of primary products for thickly settled, industrial Europe. Before the establishment of the Soviet régime, Russia was the granary of Europe. There is an abundance of iron and coal in Ukraina, Siberia, and the Urals, of oil and manganese in the Caucasus, of copper, lead, and zinc in Siberia and Central Asia, of cotton in Turkestan.

Theoretically, of course, Germany might obtain much of what it requires from Russia by means of trade. And it is not unlikely that Molotov's recent talk with Hitler in Berlin was partly concerned with such a possibility. But in actual practice the inefficiency of the Soviet system of production is a formidable handicap to the building up of a significant export surplus in Russia for the use of Germany or any other power. While the pact with Stalin was a military and political success of the first order for Hitler, its economic fruits, according to the best available information, have been very scanty.

Only a complete German control of the Soviet economy, with German engineers and technicians directing the industries and the transportation system (this method was used with good effect in Franco's territory during the Spanish civil war), would realize substantial food

and raw-material dividends from Russia. If this situation could be established with little force, or with a mere show of force, it would give Hitler a second means of breaking out of the prison of his conquests.

A third means would be a drive against Gibraltar with a view to breaking the blockade at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, opening up a route to Central and Western Africa, and perhaps making possible some blockade-running to the countries of South America.

Whatever may be the course of the war, Europe's ultimate alternative would seem to be union in some form or chaos. If Hitler wins, Europe will obviously be compulsorily united and welded into a German-dominated economic bloc which will also take in such colonial spoils as may be acquired in Asia and Africa. And if England wins, the pre-war system of unrestricted national sovereignty, while it may be respected in form, will scarcely be restored in substance.

Mr. Churchill has recently expressed the opinion that a period of desperate struggle for survival is not suitable for the publication of a blueprint of the world as it will be after the end of the war. Certainly one cannot foresee what shifts may take place before the conclusion of peace, even what the final line-up of the contending powers may be. But if Great Britain should come out victorious after such a narrow escape from destruction, there will not be, one imagines, a repetition of the negligence and the apathy which characterized the two decades of twilight zone between war and peace that followed Versailles. Great Britain and whatever allies it may possess at the conclusion of hostilities will probably organize a close military league, largely based on superiority in air power, for the purpose of guaranteeing peace in the future. Small states will not be permitted to remain aloof from this arrangement and to imperil the

common security by their weakness. The day of the unrestricted sovereignty of the small state has passed — one of the many casualties of the mechanization that has so vastly diminished the elements of time and space and given the strong still greater advantages as against the weak.

Economic union will almost certainly go hand in hand with political and military union. Great Britain, like Germany, given the premise of victory, can efficiently take the lead in organizing an economic Pan-Europe. The minds of progressive British economic and social experts of various schools of thought have been working in the direction of greater international regulation of capital investment and distribution of raw materials for a generation. There will be the strongest reasons for desiring a realization of the productive advantages of a closer European economic union. England will desperately need

a revival of normal trade and industry as a means of meeting the post-war crisis of demobilization of men and war machines.

There is indeed one alternative to the post-war union of Europe under either British or German hegemony. This is a lapse into sheer chaos, into the condition of social dissolution that prevailed not only in Russia, but in many parts of Eastern and Central Europe after the end of the first World War. This is the stake for which Stalin was playing when he did everything in his power to promote war between the other European powers through the inspired campaigns of his subsidized Communist parties in foreign countries and then quickly bowed himself out of the conflict by concluding his non-aggression pact with Hitler. The longer and more destructive the war, the greater the possibility that chaos will prevail over any kind of order when it is ended.

FOR ATLANTIC READERS AND WRITERS

THE *Atlantic Monthly*, in association with the American Institute of Architects, will award a prize of \$1000 to the author of the best essay on 'The Fine Arts in America.' A second prize of \$500 will be awarded to the runner-up. Manuscripts intended for the prize should be not more than 5000 or less than 2000 words in length; they must be submitted to the *Atlantic Monthly* on or before April 1, 1941. The judges reserve the right to reject any or all of the manuscripts, but it is their hope that the prize-winning paper will be available for publication in the June issue.

These awards have been made possible thanks to the generosity of the Waid Education Fund of the American Institute of Architects.

If you have definite and constructive ideas about the place of the fine arts in America today, *now* is your time to speak out. Detailed announcements will be sent on request to those who are interested.

THE BATTLE OF LONDON

BY H. M. TOMLINSON

I

LONDON by night has become one of the world's prodigies; and by day also occasionally, though, since the four great disasters to the German air fleet, its big bombers dare not venture over the city after the sun is up. Night, any night, is when the old capital of the British is apocalyptic, a vision not believable; though there it is, and there you are. The sounds and lights of it, and the instant serration of towers black against vivid eruptions, — in which for a moment you see a familiar shape, as though to prove that it is London indeed in which you are, — warrant the story that mankind is entering another era. The apparitional entrance to the new age seems unpropitious, and even very dangerous to those who would pass onward to a fairer time.

The port of London, until now, was not one of the world's pageants. You never heard it mentioned with Penang and Rio. Nobody ever called it the Golden Gate. Indeed, the estuary of the Thames opens so wide a channel for the commerce of Europe that a traveler, before the coming of this new age, was amid its mud flats and shoals before he knew it. He had arrived, but nothing warned him. That small object the Nore lightship? Is that all? That was about all, except the broad waters. He had no desire to cheer. The coast of the lowlands, even when it can be made out, is never more than thin markings to divide an upper and nether light. In the wind and rain, it suggests but the tenuous sub-

sistence of life. Still, did your ship ever move up Thames when day was declining into the smoke? Why, then, of course, one was apt to feel less important than one did a little earlier. There ahead was the daunting admonition of the past. That penumbra of an ancient establishment of men, the loom of their tradition, was in contest with the flames of the very sun. It was London.

All the same, our city is not beautiful. To say so would be going too far. You must listen to Charles Lamb for its enticement, and he, born in the Temple off Fleet Street, was prejudiced, as well as a poet. Poets have unusual tastes and odd views. Wordsworth, from a Thames bridge one sunrise, felt only then that London was revealed. He was deeply moved. Herman Melville, leaning on the parapet of London Bridge the morning he came to see us, took in the sullen Pool, and understood he was with his own. So he was. From there had departed the navigators for the discovery of seas and coasts, from Hudson, Davis, and Frobisher to Scott. Just below Melville, on the south side, was the mooring place of the *Golden Hind*, where Elizabeth went to knight Drake on his return from Acapulco and the Moluccas. Shakespeare learned what he knew of ships and shipmen along that waterfront. His theatre was near.

Yet we must fall back on the truth. London is not comely and personable. It loses itself in wide diffusion. No traveler, staying briefly in the city where

the Thames is said to be somewhere about, — though he hardly ever knows where, — but is forced to admit it. I should have to admit it myself, and I am a Londoner. There is also the Fulham Road, Euston, Islington, Canning Town, and Bermondsey; and numerous other such places and parishes, though in every one of them you may find something nearly as good as the tavern in Southwark where Sam Weller was first seen while cleaning boots. Yet London is not a rival of Paris, Rome, Edinburgh, New York, or Istanbul. We can only say that because of its site on a kindly river, between the eastern and western land masses of the earth, London is performing today the office once held by Bruges and Venice. We remember there was an Industrial Revolution, — we are not allowed to forget it, since it continues to a very ominous din, — and then pots and pans for the many became vastly more important than silks and spices for the few. London then found itself in the providential place on its river so friendly to ships, for iron and coal were at hand. It had been growing fairly fast since Chaucer was a collector of customs at its wharves; and when the steam engine came along — but no words can measure what happened to London after that. Its continental rivals began to envy it, and with reason. It paid no attention to them. It only increased still more. Nothing grows in this world that is good for something but has its mart in London, with Cockney experts whose heritage it is to grade the stuff. It has been said of Fenchurch Street Station that the other end of the line is in China. And what seafarer does not know the East India Dock Road? Go along it one way, and you come to Westminster Abbey; the other way takes you to landfalls in all the seas. Choose the one you want.

Though it would be prudent of you, at present, to postpone your choice. That historic road to the docks of London is unattractive, except to hostile aircraft.

Do you remember Ypres, and what the Menin Gate was to it, in the long ago? You ventured through the city towards that eastern gate at your peril. Ypres, the stumps of it, was in a desperate salient. So is London now, and its dockland is at the dangerous extremity of its vast sweep into the region of war. Tennyson warned us that it might happen, and it has come about. Navies are in fact grappling in the central blue, and London is under them. It is a battleground. Such is the progress of science, to say nothing of morals, that the altar, the hospital, and the nursery are promoted to the place of honor, as soldiers used to call the critical sector in battle. They are not only in the front line, but that part of it which must be kept at all hazards. London, in the chances of the Nazi revolt against civility, has become the main smoking bastion in the defense. You can call this the Battle of London; and in truth Austerlitz and Waterloo were brief and petty affairs in comparison — of smallish size and soon over, decisive in a day.

In the early summer we surmised that Hitler might not attack London, fearing for Berlin. And why ruin Buckingham Palace before he entered it in triumph, to announce that new way of life for all peoples revealed to him on Walpurgis Night? But his plans have been torn across. Our airmen have not waited for the German army to come to us; they have gone over to meet it. The war has been carried into Germany, and the means for invasion disarrayed and scattered before Hitler could set them moving against us. Yet if London's many millions could be terrorized? If panic should come of destruction, and the work of the capital cease, despair take hold, and London welcome any sort of quiet? That was worth the effort, though Berlin had to pay for it. London's schools and hospitals, therefore, are in the front line. Surgeons and nurses, those that survive, must burrow into collapsed masonry and steel to discover

which of their patients survive. And where a nursery was, at bedtime, won't always bear looking at in the morning. On your way to the office by the usual train — if you yourself were lucky during the night — you may have to lie on the floor of the carriage, the train at a stand, while listening to the horrific coming of a torpedo. The time you have for wondering whether it will get you seems long. Then it bursts. If you hear it go off, most likely you are still all right. But you will be late for work. You may have to walk the rest of the way, holding firmly your hope for the best, while the battle continues in the sky.

Children used to know an old game, with a rhyme, 'London Bridge has fallen down . . . London's burning, London's burning.' We have had nights when it seemed that had come about. There have been nights when fiends appeared to be at that game in reality, for the scale was past human scope; such a night was an inexplicable confusion of raving noises and flares, pandemonium, the heavens rent, flames and clangor bursting from opened hell. Would the ordinary sun ever rise again to throw light on what was left? Stunned thoughts made no answer to that. But another day did come, and there stood the spires of London, as if we had been dreaming badly the night before; you could have believed you had, except that smoke continued to roll away, the houses of neighbors had gone, and the stories began to come in. You will not know those stories till all is over, and I don't suppose you will then. The rescue and ambulance parties are unable to say what they saw and did. The abominable thing can only be whispered.

II

The battle goes on. As an old soldier said to me the other night, looking at gun flashes playing like summer lightning over and around London, hearing

the continuous salvos from thousands of guns, 'This is like Flanders the night before a push.' This time, however, his children are in it. Hate is upon us, the nurtured malignity of envy is satisfying its old grudge. Our ancient establishment, as we had been threatened, is suffering destruction. This is the hour. Those infernal lights, those numbing eruptions, portend our fate. Yet, when morning is around early once more, — and you look straight at your neighbor as he does at you over the fence, and neither of you say anything but give each other with great gravity the Nazi salute, variegated with the Communist clenched fist as an afterthought, — there the spires of London still are; and the city folk are already passing along for their train, each holding his hope for the best, and another day is beginning. But another warning will have gone before that train reaches its terminus, with more warnings and crashes to follow before the inclement dazzle of gunfire puts out the stars again, as usual.

There comes no end to it. The broadcaster tells you of a block of flats, a school, a public shelter, or a hospital being struck. Dear God! Where, this time? You are thinking of those you know. Yet it is wrong to bother the telephone girls. They have enough to do. Perhaps some of them will never return to duty. You must wait. That is why, when we get letters, we carefully check their postmarks with the last news reported of explosions in the neighborhood of those addresses. The suspense, the bearing of such a tension without showing it, demands fortitude. And the way one's own folk bear up — as a sailor would say, steer towards duty, holding as near as they can manage into the storm — gives you a respect for ordinary men and women that otherwise you might not have found. Those Cockneys! They deserve a word. Their bastion smokes, but it is there. They hold.

London holds. What will the Nazis do

next? Nobody knows, not even the Nazis. In Germany there is a frenzied man whose vision of life came of hypnosis through brooding over the nebulous coils of Teutonic mythology; and those legends and fabulous shapes, we are told, were born in the fears of savages amid the gloom of aboriginal forests. To him a dream of Thor's thundering hammer is what the glory of the Lord was to Moses. Such a dream could grow spears, but make nobody's bread and butter. But this fanatic is the leader of the Germanic tribes, and has taught them that spilling life magnifies something or other, and they believe, and follow him, eyes glazed, to a promised land, while the waters of the world, we can only conjecture, are to be piled as miraculous walls on either hand as they pass over. It is no good dismissing this as of the hobgoblins, and a nightmare. We know that, yet the fantasy has sufficient reality to explode a torpedo over the high altar of St. Paul's Cathedral. Nelson one day was shaken in his tomb by it. One of its wanton bolts ruined the old hall where *Twelfth Night* was first performed, the author in the cast, perhaps to display the modern ascendancy of the dark powers over Ariel. Goldsmith's burial place has suffered, and Lamb's birthplace.

Do these names mean anything to you? This Germanic nightmare is one from which Londoners cannot escape by awakening, for they walk in it, wide-awake, apprehensive of the next appearance of its horrible spectres. The ride of the Valkyries is heard over Pater-noster Row.

As anyone who keeps his wonder over the mystery of human nature would have guessed, — anyone, that is, except men whose faith is based on the evil in us, — the Nazi attempt to break the spirit of the citizens in the centre of the British Commonwealth has raised an unexpected power against Hitler. He may lose the war because of it. It was apparent, when that man was first no-

ticeable, that the energy of his followers came of resentful loutishness acting where reason was disconcerted and ignorance was free from restraint. He and his men till the other day knew nothing of Londoners; and not a few of the British, who did, were not sure of their quality. Yet see what happened, after his Wagnerian effort to shock those Nobodies into panic with the means by which he had crumbled other cities. Londoners are an easygoing lot. They are a medley of all the kingdom. They never show civic pride, and they have no unity. Thousands who live in such parishes as Deptford have never seen the Abbey at Westminster, and don't want to. The Guildhall of the City Fathers is less to them than the local cinema. But one day they had to view their many dead scattered among the smoking rubble which was homes but yesterday; and now they are quiet, inconsolable, deaf to appeal, stubborn, sardonic, resolved. Hitler won't know what he did to himself, when he tried to break them, till he is informed. There is a blasphemy against life to be exorcised.

After all, how could such a man know the spirit abiding in London's mean streets, where the Nobodies live? He had never heard of it. That spirit is older than the Abbey. It built the Abbey. It knew the hill on which the Tower of London stands before William the Conqueror's ancestors had so much as settled in Normandy; even before the Romans arrived to build a wall to enclose the hill's east side. How ancient is the line of the Nobodies! Why, that east side of London, beyond the Roman wall of the city, now taking the worst shocks of the Nazi assaults, had been a battleground in Alfred's reign, and before then. East-Enders today know a Roman Road, for so it is still called, but few of them know it was a causeway of the original Britons, and that Aulus Plautius used it when he marched against the sons of Cymbeline, to suffer a good hiding in the Lea marshes, and there had

to wait, by Old Ford, till the Emperor Claudius came to his aid. A stiff-necked generation about there even then gave the Romans a deal of trouble. Near Old Ford is a shabby little turning we know as Priory Street. You recall what Chaucer said of a prioress and the kind of French she spake in her nose? Her Benedictine convent stood where those small houses and cheap shops are now. Pay no attention, for the moment, to the desolation Hitler has spread around near by. That convent was founded by Edgar, about 960, on the advice of Dunstan, who then was lord of Stepney Manor.

These origins are everywhere in London within the silence of time past. The ghosts are in all its ways. Do not suppose our city is only a world market. For my part, I know the quay where Conrad's *Torrens* used to tie up, and saw her alongside. Do not suppose our ships carry only cargoes. And it is still something to us Londoners — we haven't forgotten it, though it was long ago — that Wat the Tyler, an early stalwart for the rights of free men, died in Mile End, a short walk from the Benedictine convent. Our forefathers stood up to the matter in that distant year; but it is doubtful if any Nazi has read *The Dream of John Ball*, by William Morris. It is a dream still dreamed by sundry persons in London. For the folk of London and its neighborhood were ever a difficult people, strict for their privileges, which they had won from kings, and hopeful of still better times. Their kings learned to respect them, and had reason.

What a long journey it is from the sons of Cymbeline to Sam Weller! But it is a straight road, running from the beginning till now. One meets much the same sort of fellow all the way to where Sam is doing his best in a Southwark tavern, when we see him first, relishing his job, while understanding his master as well as he does his own father. Sam, we feel, is the outcome of a culture as mellow as

that of the Chinese — tolerant, bantering, wary, derisive while helpful, able to keep his footing when others fall, kindly even to the high and mighty, having seen them many a time and knowing the way of all flesh; greeting heroics and eloquence with the wry smile of those who know how easily applecarts are upset. 'Jim,' exclaimed a Cockney in the last war, drawing back in mock surprise when his company was entering a trench for the first time, 'why, this place is dangerous!' It is not for nothing that London can count its representative genius in Sam Weller, Marie Lloyd, and Charlie Chaplin. If Hitler had appreciated that fact he might have preferred to wait a little longer. Now he must go on.

He learned what he knows of us from Ribbentrop, and that precocious student won his information at dinners, while ambassador in London, from a light and vain circle as remote as its lap dogs from the common English life which keeps the chimneys smoking and the wheels turning. So of course he never heard of Sam, and his surprise that such a fellow exists would be pleasant to watch. How queer it is of German knowledge, that, though extensive and logically ordered, it is apt to lack in the only place which could turn it into wisdom!

It was for that peculiar reason, and no other, that September 1940 was what it was for Londoners. One day in the first week of that month, before the alarm had sounded, when in an instant of time the sky was terrible with war engines, you could have supposed the halycon bird was about to nest on the calm waters of the Thames estuary, so lofty, radiant, and tranquil was the prelude to autumn. The shock of reality, uncovered in a moment, was a test of character. There was a pause of consternation. People looked at each other. Was this the thing itself? Then the test was past. All who had duties were at their posts. The day had come.

III

We had better make up our minds at once that the whole truth of it can never be known. What is history? A recorder can but give slight indications. War, that immense and blasting spectacle, is only what takes place in the lonely heart. A man suffers in his flesh alone, Duhamel told us in the last war, and that is why wars go on. Shall we put down what has happened when a mother extracts her child from brickbats and it is dead? Or say what is in a father's mind, after he has hurried home to make sure of that place at least, to find all his street but unrelated smouldering dust? Is there anything to be said? There is nothing one can say; and yet just there, in that moment, in the ruins of households still reeking, where the dead are, is the truth of high politics, hitherto known only to the privileged. Now the mystery is plain. It is no more than a mother, who holds a dead child, and doesn't know what to do with it, for she has nowhere to go.

That part of London east from Aldgate Pump to Tilbury Docks I ought to know well. Visitors rarely go that way. There is nothing to see. They view the Pool from Tower Quay or London Bridge. Eastward goes London River, as sailors call the stream, to the Maplin and Nore lights. It is London's main highway. Twice a day the sea comes up to fill the heart of the capital. The sea makes a difference, and adapts those who know it to the presence of peril. I don't suppose Ribbentrop knew that, or ever got as far in London as Poplar, Canning Town, and such riverside parishes, so he would be unaware of what was sure to happen if ever German war planes dropped their loads over them. A friendly but contumacious people, there. They have always been inclined to march with banners, when the mood came over them; though as they are but dockers, sailors, engineers, boilermakers, shipwrights, stevedores, and what not,

they are never seen in fashionable circles; which is a pity, because the knowledge of what takes place when they are upset does not sufficiently circulate.

I remember, too, that in the last war I used to write of the heartening worth of the men of the rear guard, their fortune a crossroads, and what was to come to be there soon. For in life, as in reading, one has to take so many stories of human frailty amid the squalor of existence as a matter of course; and therefore to witness, once in a way, a few soldiers fixing their harness somewhat firmer, and lying down, very quiet, ready for death that their comrades may get clear, is almost the same as hearing very certainly the clarion of a heavenly messenger. I used to think so; for, yes, how usual is human frailty. But I have learned since how common is valor, though when things are well we do not see it in the strangers about us, because no special call has come. That, today, is an assurance of a better world, if we survive, and if we will it. It was not soldiers who kept the lines of London steady when Göring's legions struck. Only one's neighbors were there. They did it. One cannot picture the elderly man we see every morning going for his train as a cool one of the rear guard at a fatal crossroads. Nothing like it. He was always good at dahlias, though his literary opinions are inappropriate, but no soldier. There he was — there he still is — cool while shrapnel smacks about, walls are toppling, fires must be put out, and the dead taken from a stricken shelter, while the whooping of Hitler's revelation still goes on about him. The fires springing up in unexpected places do not dazzle him.

I was unaware mettled people are so numerous. Valor seems ordinary in ordinary men and women. Very likely it comes of a natural revolt against iniquity, a native hatred of cruelty. Yet these people show no hate, only a shocked ruth, only a slow anger. There was a slight girl — better used, I should

guess, to a draper's counter — who took an ambulance party of her own sort into a neighborhood that resembled Sodom and Gomorrah when wrath was purging sin. She remarked afterwards that she could not see her way very well because there was so much smoke and dust, to say nothing of walls coming over. When more bombs began to spread more walls, her girls could not lie down, she pointed out, because broken glass covered the road. Besides, it did not seem to matter. She found and brought out the helpless. Tell me, are not medals and decorations out of date? They discriminate, where there is nothing to distinguish. I love my Cockneys.

IV

If, when the man who was to write *Moby Dick* looked down Thames from London Bridge, it had been as late as the night of September 7, 1940, he would have seen something out of reach of words. It was the night of doomsday, and not only the earth but the firmament was blazing. He would have seen he was present at the final act, the culmination of the long conflict between good and evil; and there are no words for that known to men. His fear for human destiny, should pride in folly continue to challenge powers unknown, would have told him that he was the last man, the lone watcher of the sacrifice of mankind's effort to Abaddon. The story was ending. Others appeared to be beside him at the parapet, but they were only phantoms, gaping, as he was himself, at the scene in which human aspirations were going up in smoke. Phantoms they were; their day was over; and the smoke of all they had done in their lives was worthy of their unfortunate yet heroic ways, billowing and passionate volumes of smoke, — scarlet, orange, gold, purple, and silver, — the mounting inflammables of ambition and pride. These figures beside him, watching with him, were only masks lac-

quered red by the flames of the hot gulf along the gloomy verge of which they floated.

Could that be London? This was its old place. Those wavering shapes were of the Pool, and there the Norman battlements of the Tower were also, as ever, but all shook and pulsed, as if resolving into their incandescent elements, and would pass with everything, with the smoke. The Thames moved below as a river of blood. That dreadful wail he heard was the uprising of man's universal anguish.

No, not quite. One of the phantoms beside him moved abruptly, and spoke. 'Hey, out of it, you! Down below. Here the blighters come again.' The wraith was off, as a galaxy of sparks exploded in the distance, followed by a blast. There were, that night, watchers on the hills in the suburbs who feared that London was done for, and who were heartened, next morning, when there it was the same as ever, but for patching smoke. They took their trains and buses, not without more difficulty than usual, found the old place veritably was standing, and they did what work they could in it. Ruins were fewer than they expected to find, though there were more than enough; but when the stories from their friends in the eastern parishes began to arrive, they understood well that something had happened which could never be overlooked, for it marked a turning point in the history of civilization. Beyond a peradventure, they knew what must be done. Not for nothing is there a London tradition, though in easy days it can be forgotten.

So we go on. There are nights in London, moonlighted, and altogether new to the old city, which are as beautiful and strange as in a space apart from tribulation. A street in the city, abandoned to only that pale light, is as eerie as the palace Kubla Khan decreed. It is waiting. One keeps to the shadow of a wall, as though in wary desecration of a place not meant for footfalls. For the

warning has sounded. There is a whistle and crash, it is hard to say where, and across a turning in the light of the moon goes a group of helmeted figures at the double. It looks theatrical. It might be of the films, but it is wiser to accept it as present reality and dive underground, if you have time for it and refuge is at hand.

It should be said now, for this is the place, that but for one fact not even the stout hearts of Londoners could have saved their city from destruction. Their courage would have been unavailing. Faith saved them, as they cut off roaring gas mains, stopped the cataracts from fractured conduits, doused the volcanoes, got out the dead and dying. For citizens, though they heard the battle continuous in the clouds, and on certain days saw the gigantic hieroglyphics written on the heavens by the exhaust vapors of invisible engines, could rarely make out anything of it. It was in the heights. They knew their young gallants were aloft; navies were grappling in the central blue. Yet all they could do was to pray that all went well up there.

It went well. And though we had faith in our aerial fleet, as in that other fleet, we were dumbfounded when we heard the measure of victory. Nelson himself could not have asked for more. The enemy had been showered down. He is cruel, that enemy, for chivalry is expunged from his code, yet his fall is a

dreadful sight. One day, during the affair, I was trying in vain to glimpse the battle in the sky. Sombre cumulus clouds poised in a brooding air were themselves sufficiently awful with the rays of a declining sun pouring through apertures. The unseen war was among them. Three vast fountains uprose on the calm waters, and stood strangely, as long as while we wondered whether they were planes or bombs. A livid ball appeared, and zigzagged down the bulge of a thundercloud, as if it were phenomenally slow lightning. That was a plane, and it was dying. A sharper rattle of machine guns took our eyes to a cloud right overhead. We shrank within ourselves. A Messerschmitt was diving at us. There was no time to move. It enlarged from a bright toy to a dire meteor, falling head-first, body alight, arms helplessly outspread, and plunged. One is not likely to forget it. We stood, for another unseen plane seemed to be following immediately and directly at us, with an increasing drone which shuddered one's bones with its power. Only when that sound had passed did we realize that it was the dying cry of the Messerschmitt following its body down. The cloud from which the German had fallen moved on. It uncovered, in an area of blue, a fleet of Hurricanes and Spitfires, bright and tiny as white moths, in leisurely evolutions, heading east, on easy duty bent, driving the enemy out of England.

THE SECOND EMPIRE

BY ALBERT JAY NOCK

IN the revolution-racked Paris of 1848, a lad of fourteen named Ludovic Halévy, walking with his grandfather, turned loose a great spate of juvenile enthusiasm for the republic which Lamartine had just proclaimed over the ruins of the July Monarchy. The old man sat down on a curbstone, saying simply, 'You don't know what a republic means, my boy. I have seen a republic.' He had; he had seen the republic of 1793.

The lad growing up under the régime of 1848 soon had plenty of chance to see with his own eyes 'what a republic means.' It had been launched out of a provisional government made up, as a modern French historian says, 'from the veriest scum of the gutters,' and Lamartine had proclaimed it frankly for money; he was deep in the red, as always, and his espousal of a republic was a gamble on his chances of reaching the presidency, which he failed to do. From this beginning the republic at once became a hunting ground for disciples of the various pinks and crackpots who had been gnawing at the social fabric ever since the revolution of 1830 — Proudhon, St.-Simon, the laborite collectivist Louis Blanc, Fourier, Cabet, Leroux. Then, surrounding this fragrant medley of needy adventurers, careerists, rogues, cranks, uplifters, social planners, and hurrying it on from one ruinous absurdity to another, were the proletarian and sub-proletarian masses. It was Ledru-Rollin, one of the bellwethers of the republican fold, who coined an immortal saying to fit this situation, 'I must follow the mob, because I lead them.'

'*À la bonne heure,*' gayly cried the painter Horace Vernet, surveying this fine array of republican talent, 'give me a republic as we understand it in France, all rulers, all natural-born sovereigns, gods in mortals' disguise who dance to the piping of the devil. There have been two such since I was born; there may be another half-dozen like them in the next two centuries, because before you can have an ideal republic you must have some ideal republicans, and nature can't afford to fool away her most precious gifts on a lot of jackleg lawyers and hobnail-booted riffraff. . . . You might as well ask her to make a nation of Raphaels, Michelangelos, Shakespeares or Molières.'

Such was the Second Republic, the thought of which had so stirred young Halévy, but which, as Guizot said, 'had not even a Monk, let alone a Washington or a Cromwell, and Louis-Napoléon had to help himself to the throne.' France floundered and wallowed under it until in 1852 its duly elected president took over by a *coup d'état*, and established the Second Empire, putting the nation under eight years of unqualified despotism; and that was that.

France rose almost at once to the height of a roaring prosperity, good for eighteen years. It became the political arbiter of Europe, and Paris became the cultural and social capital of the world. All this looked good, and it was good; but it could not last. After 1865 the weakness of the emperor, tortured by disease; the pernicious meddlings of the empress; the bickerings of legislators —

these swept the régime into blunder after blunder, finally into extinction. Meanwhile again the forces of republicanism were gathering and biding their time; in spirit and quality they were the same old forces of 1848, Vernet's natural-born sovereigns, eager to dance to the devil's piping furnished by jackleg lawyers, needy adventurers, half-cracked publicists. One could see what was coming.

In 1867 Ludovic Halévy, one of the most high-minded and noble-spirited men of his time, resigned his seat in the Corps Législatif; and shortly afterwards he wrote, 'All I carry away with me from the seven years I spent in the midst of the representatives of my country is the most profound political indifference. . . . As for genuine convictions, there were none, none whatever, either on the Right or on the Left. There were only people who were nothing and wanted to be something; that was all.'

Query: Is it probable that in that period many Frenchmen of like character came to share Halévy's feeling of the most profound political indifference? I think so.

After Sedan, one band of republicans — the beauties of Delescluze, Blanqui, Félix Pyat & Co. — swarmed down on the carcass of the empire, only to find that the rival gang of Gambetta, Favre & Co. had stolen a march on them and were already picking its bones. Later the rivals agreed on a 'divvy,' but meanwhile the country had survived the Commune and one or two makeshift administrations, and the Third Republic was finally set going. Its inception could not be better described than by a witty contemporary, as 'the crownless coronation of a half-hundred King Pétauds.'

Halévy saw all this; he lived until 1908. Query, again: Are there today some Frenchmen of Halévy's type who, looking back over the long roster of nobodies who have misgoverned republican France since Sedan, share his feeling of the most profound political indifference? I think it is highly probable.

The Second Empire, by M. Octave Aubry, has lately been published in an English translation, apparently a good one; I have not seen the original. It easily transcends and effaces everything hitherto published in our language on this subject. Its estimate of the *dramatis personæ*, their activities, and their political and social conditions, is singularly accurate. Its discussions are eminently rational, objective, free of sentimentalism. In a word, it is the book I have been wishing for these twenty years, and never thought I should live to see.

But what is the Second Empire to us? In itself nothing, if you like. For the student of civilized man the period has a peculiar fascination, even a peculiar charm; but I do not recommend the book on any such account, though I might well do so. On the contrary, I present it as something which thoughtful Americans should read with their own country uppermost in their minds at every page. Its value for them is in the clear and steady light it throws on matters which most of them are now probably for the first time perceiving to be of capital importance. Pseudo-ideas to be overhauled; cant terms to be reëxamined; the basis of hitherto unquestioned beliefs to be tested for soundness; superstitions to be seen for what they are — the sense of all this as something to be done must be pressing upon intelligent Americans with unusual urgency; and it is as a powerful aid in meeting this demand that I recommend M. Aubry's superb book.

For example, we are all republicans, born and bred in the republican tradition; yet many of us have an uneasy suspicion that we are now only beginning to 'know what a republic means.' For us, then, M. Aubry's discussion of the Second Republic at the outset of his book is invaluable. In particular, every American should memorize the middle paragraph on the twenty-sixth page, and devoutly rehearse it aloud every morning as a religious exercise to prepare him for reading his newspaper.

Again, we are all democrats, we believe in democracy; and we now find that we are but beginning to know what democracy means. As someone said to me the other day in bitter jest, 'Democracy has only just caught up with the United States.' It caught up with France some time ago, and M. Aubry opens its record for our inspection. It has caught up with other countries, and is pretty well catching up with the world at large; so M. Aubry's work is of great practical consequence to us in our attempts to measure and understand its import.

It is good sound democracy, too, though special political interests do their best to disguise it. A friend lately told me with great amusement of a conversation with a man who had held a succession of our highest offices, and is supposed to be especially well informed on foreign affairs. This man said, 'There is one thing about Europe that I simply can't get through my head. I don't understand it. Not one of those dictators has seized power, not a single one. *The people want them.*'

Apparently so; this eminent man was coming in by freight, as we say. Their reasons for wanting the dictators may seem unsatisfactory to us, but that is not to the point. The fact remains that they do; and this being so, is it not of the essence of democracy that these dictators should be where they are and be doing as they do? What, then, becomes of our discriminations in favor of 'the great democratic countries'? Does the democratic principle need overhauling, or is our devotion to it either ignorant or specious?

Let the reader look at the popular majorities which Louis-Napoléon commanded, first, as president; then as dictator; then as liberal emperor down to the last election a few months before the empire collapsed. M. Aubry says, and Morny acknowledged, that the seizure of power, the *coup d'état* of December, was a gross political error. Louis-Napoléon would have been reelected to the

presidency without it, the constitutional prohibition notwithstanding — a much more substantial obstacle than our tradition against a third term. The people wanted him.

But after 1852 the elections were not free elections, and neither are those in the dictator-bossed countries of Europe. Only the 'great democracies' have free elections. It may be so, but the thing is worth examining because a good deal depends on what our idea of a free election is. Portugal is a dictator-bossed European country which for some reason our publicists never mention. When I was there it was peaceful, doing very well, getting the best and cheapest government in Europe, and you could not pry the dictator out of office with a crowbar. An election held just before my visit seemed to show that the people wanted him — very reasonably, I should say — and if the election was forced I heard nothing about it.

On M. Aubry's showing I should say that the elections held under the Empire were quite as free as ours, for on counting up the devices to affect voting I found none that is not regularly in operation here. No politician south of Mason and Dixon's line could learn anything from Morny, Maupas or Persigny. The fact seems to be that the line between free and forced elections is pretty hard to draw, and that most of our assumptions about it are illusory.

It is on such matters as these that M. Aubry focuses our attention; such are the questions he continually raises. Now that we begin to 'know what a republic means,' we are brought face to face with Vernet's dictum — well, what about it? The practical issue of 'democracy' being what it is, what about Halévy's attitude of the most profound political indifference?

M. Aubry tells us nothing, insists upon nothing, teaches us nothing; but he puts us in the way of teaching ourselves a great deal, and no service can be more salutary than this.

AUTOMOBILES GO AHEAD

BY SHELBY CULLOM DAVIS

I

A NEW task of armament production is now being superimposed upon the automobile industry. Can it undertake this without sacrificing its regular duties of providing good and inexpensive transportation for the American people?

Competition is the lifeblood of the automobile industry — competition plus the driving energy and vision of the men in the industry for whom success is merely a temporary resting place, and temporary failure merely a challenge. That fact has stood clear in recent years when depression threatened the whole philosophy of this country. It was the spirit of competition, for example, that made the late Walter Chrysler, in the nadir of the 1932 depression, spend \$9,000,000 to retool for a new Plymouth model so that the following year the number of Plymouths sold passed the previous 1929 record high. It was the driving energy of Chrysler Corporation, which entered the decade of the thirties selling less than a tenth of the automobiles purchased, that brought it out selling about one in every four. It was the vision of that famous triumvirate, Sloan, Knudsen, and Kettering, that helped to develop so many outstanding improvements in automobiles and has maintained General Motors in both high esteem and high estate. It is the spirit of Henry Ford, pioneer of them all, whose challenge last summer of 1000 planes a day dismayed realistic aircraft and automobile producers, that has achieved the impossible before and has

the opportunity to do it now on a government contract for 4000 aircraft engines. It is the spirit of Packard, Studebaker, Nash, and others of the smaller companies which have refused to sing their swan songs in the face of severer competition, that has enabled them to revise their production methods sharply, and to continue with success.

Today, after the longest and most devastating depression in American history, after years of political jousting that has inhibited investment in industry as a whole, the automobile industry finds that (1) its capacity to produce automobiles and trucks is greater than it has ever been; (2) its productive equipment, its factories and machinery, are better than ever; (3) its organizing, engineering, and research talents are more fruitful; (4) its product gives far greater value; (5) its employment is steadier, and there are more man hours for each unit of production; (6) its wages are higher and its hours are shorter.

'Maybe we could learn something from the dressmakers who change styles with every season,' Mr. Kettering once observed. 'They carry over only a very little from the past and obsolete their product four times a year.' A casual remark, but significant. The automobile industry learns from other industries. It reveres change.

Vitality important is industry's increased reliance upon machines. This does not mean that men are unimportant, for hourly wage rates are at the

highest level in history, up 30 per cent since 1930. But the industry has concentrated the skill of its personnel in its tool and die and machinery shops. This skill has created greatly improved tools and machinery and better dies, which require less expertness, perhaps, for workmen to handle and consequently less allowance for margin of error.

In essence, the application of skill in the manufacture of automobiles has moved from the manufacture of the automobiles to the making of the instruments which make the automobiles. The model change each year takes its toll of obsolescence among tools, for with the mass-production methods of the automobile industry some new tools and machines are needed for each new model, as well as sometimes a whole new set of dies. More than \$300,000,000 a year is spent by automobile companies just to replace worn tools and build new plants, to set up new dies and install better equipment. Henry Ford is said to have made the warning that sufficient progress in production was impossible unless one fifth of the plant and equipment was scrapped each year.

This procedure is good for the automobile industry and is equally good for the national economy. The machinery manufacturers are helped and stimulated to produce better machines by being assured of a market. Workers in the machinery industries find increased employment, with corresponding benefit to all consumer-goods industries. And the economist at last can find something to view with satisfaction.

For a specific example of how this has worked, suppose we turn to Buick, one of the largest self-contained automobile plants in the world, and a division of General Motors.

When Harlow H. Curtice, who began his business career as an accountant, was moved from the headship of the big AC Spark Plug plant in Flint to the general managership of Buick in 1933, he found his new division in a run-down condi-

tion. In fact, its pulse was very weak. Sales had dropped to 42,000 cars in 1932. People were saying that the slim-pocketbook era would kill off all the more expensive cars.

After extensive studies and surveys, Mr. Curtice started spending money to rebuild his factory and machinery, and above all for new tools for new models. From 1936 to 1940, one fifth of all the Buick factory capacity was replaced by new buildings. And the machinery and equipment were steadily improved: today about 70 per cent of the machines in the Buick factories are less than ten years old. To put it another way, since 1935 more than 81 per cent of total capital invested in Buick plants has been ploughed back into plant improvement.

Total investment in the new 1941 models runs into eight figures, including the largest model tool bill for any year in Buick's history except 1940. This is all the more impressive when it is realized that Ford, with over three times the volume of production, spends annually about \$5,000,000 for new tools and machinery for style changes. However, Ford expenditures for plant extension and replacement during the past six years have been \$169,152,000.

The Buick management calls these figures the 'price of success' — and well worth it, too. From the 42,000 annual level in 1932, Buick sales are now running at an annual rate of 350,000. And the automobile is better in every way.

II

Let us go into the automobile plants themselves and see how this money was spent and how productive facilities have been improved and increased. But one word of caution before we begin. We cannot see everything — the plants are too vast for that. And we cannot expect to see neon signs flashing 'Progress' over the important improvements. Some of the most vital changes, such as reducing the weight of a part or increasing toler-

ance from $\frac{1}{1000}$ to $\frac{1}{10,000}$, are scarcely visible. For the improved production methods of the last decade are on the whole evolutionary rather than revolutionary, and are not always noticeable save to the technician. The offensive toward better production is being waged on all fronts, big and small.

The shock troops in any such struggle as this in the Buick plant are called Process Men. Their job is to keep up to the minute on all the latest improvements. They are all-round men, with experience in engineering as well as production. Buick has twenty of them. Not only do they inspect every new part going into a Buick to determine whether it is being manufactured and assembled in the best possible way; they also travel around the country on the lookout for new machines and new ideas. If a superintendent of a division or a foreman has an idea for a better production method — and they often have — a Process Man is called in immediately.

One of the first steps taken by the new Buick management after assuming control in 1933 was to condense the three short final assembly lines into one long line, into which led a myriad of conveyor belts and chains ($7\frac{1}{2}$ miles of them now) all bearing finished parts ready for the final assembly. At that time the many nuts and bolts on the automobile were tightened largely by hand tools. Since then special high-cycle tools run by electric motors have been installed over the final assembly line so that the worker has only to reach up in the air, pull down his tool, apply it, and then let it rest in mid-air again. Practically all of the five hundred men on the final assembly line have this tool, which is not only faster but more accurate than the hand method. At about \$65 a tool, that is one definite expenditure that has helped increase Buick efficiency so that a car a minute, sixty an hour, is the regular schedule on the final assembly line now as against about forty-five with the obsolete methods and machinery of 1933.

Another easily visible improvement is the testing machine at the end of the assembly line which assures that wheels and tires are in perfect balance at high speeds and under bumpy conditions. Until a few years ago it had been necessary to drive the automobile around the yards, at a considerable loss of time. Now the engine is accelerated up to fifty miles per hour while the wheels spin around on a revolving steel wheel imbedded in the factory floor.

In the Buick foundry great changes have been made. For instance, a new sand-mixing and sand-drying unit has been installed. This mixes the sand automatically, screens it, and accurately weighs the oil and water that are added to the sand. A new shot-blasting machine — developed by Buick with the collaboration of outside engineers — to blast away the sand adhering to castings has reduced the cost of this operation by approximately 50 per cent.

Not only have better machines been added to the foundry, but the plant layout has been redesigned to permit more economical handling of materials. The result is that the same-sized foundry can now turn out three times as much as when it was erected thirteen years ago.

III

Nor have these savings been made at the expense of labor. It is true that specific operations require less labor than they used to, but additional operations have been added as more and more value is built into the car in greater durability and riding comfort. The result is that there are more man hours of labor expended on a car than formerly. Mr. Knudsen has said that 'the industry need make no defense of labor-saving devices.' The fruits of these devices make work lighter and are given to the public in the shape of cheaper cars or better cars for the same price, thereby creating greater new-car sales and consequently greater employment.

Mr. Edsel Ford has recently drawn up some interesting figures on this point, with reference to his company. For the three years ended February 29, 1936, the average number of man hours of labor for each car produced was 179.13. For the three years ended November 30, 1939, it was 201.95, or an increase of 13 per cent. And since hourly wage rates have advanced, the labor cost per unit is far greater. In 1934 the labor cost per Ford was \$119.41; in 1939, it was \$197.84, or an increase of 65 per cent.

Let us go back still further, to the days of the famous old Model T, which, you remember, you could have in any color as long as it was black. In 1926 the amount of payroll and outside material purchases per Model T (in all 5000 parts) was \$454.42. On the Model A, with its 6000 parts, this was \$526.84 by 1929. And ten years later on the V-8, with approximately 16,000 parts, this figure was \$683.23. Obviously the companies have been able to absorb these higher costs without raising their prices only by means of more efficient production.

I have said that added value is being constantly built into automobiles. Take the remote-control gear shift on the steering wheel, which has become universal. Formerly a lever with a ball on the end of it was run up directly from the transmission, and with it you shifted gears. Then the engineers devised the new control, which met with public acceptance. The new remote control requires forty parts, compared with only a few parts for the old. Yet it doesn't function any differently. All these parts have to be designed, tooled, and produced, which makes for added value as well as added employment per car.

A car of equivalent size sells for a third less today than it did ten years ago, but the popular-priced car today has quality features unknown or available only on luxury vehicles a few years ago. Let me tabulate some of these improvements:—

1. Safety glass and split, anti-glare windshields

2. Silent gears and synchronized vacuum-controlled shifting

3. Soft front-wheel suspension (including individual springs per wheel); double-action shock absorbers and redistributed weight for easy riding

4. High-compression motors with automatic spark control, down-draft carburetors and soft, balanced rubber mountings, giving smooth power with economy

5. Forced-draft, controlled ventilating and air conditioning, with windshield defrosters

6. Streamlined, silenced, all-steel bodies with steel tops, built-in trunks, and enclosed spare tire

7. Synthetic lacquer finish in every color of the rainbow, weatherproof and non-fading

8. Sealed bearings and air-intake and oil cleaners keeping grit and water away from bearing surfaces, doubling life, minimizing wear and repairs

9. Front seat widened four or five inches and gear shift and brake levers moved away to provide comfort for adults, safety for children

10. Fully counterbalanced engines, flywheels, propeller shafts, wheels, and so forth to eliminate vibration and increase car life

All these improvements have been the result of long, hard, and successful labor on the part of engineers and research and production men.

For those who like their statistics raw, here are some of the improvements in automobiles which have occurred from the beginning to the end of the thirties:

	1930	1939
Weight of car (pounds).....	2,780	2,996
Brake horsepower.....	64	85
Compression ratio (engine).....	5.15	6.41
Revolutions per minute (engine)	3,170	3,580
Delivered price.....	\$1,118	\$795

In addition, tests recently completed by Pontiac reveal that the driving of a car today requires only one fourth as much physical effort as a decade ago. The muscular exertion to steer, brake, and shift a car requires only 2787 foot-pounds (units of work to lift one pound for one foot), compared with 10,320 foot-pounds ten years ago.

To achieve these improvements, and at the same time lower the price of the

automobile, is a mark of the miracle of the motor industry.

That watchdog over business, the Federal Trade Commission, has recently taken the time to praise the progress of the automobile industry. 'Consumer benefits,' it pointed out, 'have probably been more substantial than in any other large industry studied by the Commission.'

IV

I should like to draw up a partial list of the old and the new production methods used in manufacturing automobiles. Not all of the new methods were pioneered by the automobile industry, but they all were advanced with the industry's active collaboration. And that, incidentally, is one of the strong points of this strong industry. It has no false pride of authorship. It adopts from other industries, and at the same time contributes to other industries and works with them to improve their products.

A glance at the two columns below, showing the old production methods of the middle twenties and those in use today, illustrate in brief and concrete form the production improvements that have taken place, detailed description of which would fill many technical volumes: —

<i>Old</i>	<i>vs.</i>	<i>New</i>
Turret lathes	<i>vs.</i>	Automatic screw machine
Engine lathe	<i>vs.</i>	{ Crankshaft lathe Centreless grinder
Planer	<i>vs.</i>	Milling machine
Hydraulic press	<i>vs.</i>	Toggle press
Milling machine	<i>vs.</i>	Broach, hobbing machine
Trucking supplies . . .	<i>vs.</i>	Continuous conveyor
Screw machine	<i>vs.</i>	Upset
Hand wrenches	<i>vs.</i>	Counterweighted power tools
Hand trimming	<i>vs.</i>	Rotary shears and dies
Torch welding	<i>vs.</i>	Jig flash welding
Carbon tool steel . . .	<i>vs.</i>	Tungsten carbide
Hand sewing and stuffing	<i>vs.</i>	Multi-pleater
Hand-brush, slow-drying enamel	<i>vs.</i>	Sprayed lacquer
Riveting	<i>vs.</i>	Butt welding
Floor moulding and casting	<i>vs.</i>	Conveyor process
Forging	<i>vs.</i>	Alloy steel castings
Hand inspection	<i>vs.</i>	Automatic inspection

From this master list, as it were, of improved methods have come literally thousands of improvements in individual operations in automobile manufacturing. At the Pontiac plant last summer, output of finished iron in the foundry was raised 50 per cent by modernization. Automatic grinders have replaced individual swing grinders and have increased the capacity in machining engine blocks nearly 200 per cent. Work is now proceeding on a continuous operation of machines which, from a rough casting, will build a finished and highly accurate crankshaft. Ford's new method of baking paint by using two 'clamshells' of infra-red lights, fitted with gold-plated reflectors for better transmission of heat, has reduced the time required per car from one hour to seven minutes. A new steel-back, high-lead babbitt bearing is expected to increase engine-bearing life over 200 per cent and is said to meet completely the requirements for an ideal bearing as outlined five years ago. The modern press-shop technique at Buick is able to stamp out sheet metal for the front end of automobiles and elongate it as much as 50 per cent. In some instances the number of pressing operations required to bring a panel into final form has been halved. Where forty to fifty panels an hour used to be the output, schedules now call for one hundred and fifty to two hundred an hour, shaped in far more intricate forms.

These are only a few of the concrete achievements. Mention should be made of the uncanny automatic inspection machines designed by enterprising young George Pascoe for Ford, and a recent gauging machine that takes fifty separate measurements on crankshafts, checks accuracy to the almost incredible $\frac{1}{10,000}$ of an inch, and emits red ink on those parts failing to make the grade.

Another new, prescient machine recently developed by Buick, and said to be the only one in the industry, sees that the complete engine and clutch assembly are in perfect balance at high speed.

The development of this machine and its predecessors has already greatly aided the aviation industry. For vibration in an airplane engine, parts of which rotate at a speed of 18,000–24,000 revolutions per minute, is even more dangerous than in an automobile engine running at from 2000 to 8000 revolutions per minute.

In the automobile it was found that at high speeds vibration set in and caused objectional roughness and even breakage of parts. This was due to the centrifugal force coming into play. As the crankshaft is a rotating mechanism, it had to be in dynamic balance, which could be achieved by individually balancing each end of the shaft. Machines were therefore developed which rotated the shaft and measured the unbalanced centrifugal forces set up at each end of the rotating mass, making it possible to determine where metal must be shaved away to afford perfect balance. Vibration thus was eliminated at its source. The accuracy of balancing that is maintained in production today was virtually unheard of except in laboratories a few years ago.

In the aircraft field the successful application of this balancing machine in the course of production has eliminated many of the hazards once brought on by mechanical failure.

Nor are all the improvements by any means the result of new machines. In many cases engineering study shows that only a simple adjustment is necessary to make the part stronger and add to its life. Rear axle shafts for years were designed with sharp shoulders upon which the bearing or gear was seated. Failures were frequent until the engineers rounded off the corners of the design a few thousandths of an inch to eliminate the concentrated strains.

One of the latest scientific advances for measuring strain is to make a transparent plastic model of some highly stressed metal part — such as a gear or connecting rod — and to examine the model by passing polarized light through

it. When the model is subjected to loads which represent the conditions of actual use, bright bands of color appear, like miniature rainbows, showing up the sections of greatest strain. It is an effective method of studying the stresses of a design part, as it clearly reveals the magnitude, distribution, and direction of the stresses.

The electric sander relieves workmen of pushing a hand file back and forth over the body's surface, one of the most tiresome manual jobs found in motor plants. Not only does the electric belt do the job faster and more expertly, but workmen no longer experience sore back and shoulder muscles and the brutal fatigue which once went with the job.

For thirteen years Chrysler engineers had evolved engines that attained higher compression ratios, more revolutions per minute, and greater horsepower per pound of motor. But there came a time when a problem loomed ahead in the road of further progress. Were the loads of higher compression getting to be too much for the connecting-rod bearings and too much for the oil films that were supposed to keep whirling metal from touching and burning?

The mechanic's answer, as of about 1925, would have been to make the bearings larger to carry the greater load. In fact, without resort to pure science, there wouldn't have been any other answer. The cost to Chrysler Corporation of installing larger bearings would have been millions of dollars for retooling to build a larger engine block. And in addition to this would have been the perpetual cost to the buyer of paying for extra poundage of metal with which to make the larger engine block, and the cost of fuel and power to haul that extra weight around. The penalty for greater efficiency seemed to be so costly that progress in terms of bearings would have to be made in some other way.

So various departments of Chrysler Corporation's engineering laboratory were mobilized to deal with these crucial

pieces of metal. Several arts were focused upon the bearing. Photomicrography searched the surface and body of the bearing's babbit metal. Spectrography probed it for the most minutely unwelcome metallurgical presences. X-ray diffraction photographs discovered the grain structure in the bearing's protective layer. A superfinishing process was applied to the crankshaft journals to remove from the bearing's surface microscopic metal jaggedness that might pierce the oil's guardian film. Meanwhile lubrication engineers were working on the oil itself, to make sure of having this partner in the high-compression team equipped to hold up its end of the burden.

Profilometer engineers, dynamometer engineers, road-test engineers, oil-filter engineers, air-intake-cleaner engineers, and crankcase-ventilation engineers concentrated their art upon the problem.

What was the result of this collaboration of a number of specialized sciences that do not have time to learn to speak each other's technical language? A smaller bearing that would stand up four times longer; a direct saving to Chrysler Corporation in potential retooling costs; a saving of nineteen pounds of metal in one engine; a saving in the actual cost of bearings — and to the problem originally presented a complete solution that brought the future into sharper focus.

With such a record of past performance in production and engineering and research, one is bound to wonder whether the future of the automobile is far distant from that presented in 1939 before the World Automotive Engineering Congress of the Society of Automotive Engineers, and said to represent the composite opinion of many of the Society's members. In the future, it was said, 'we shall walk up to our car, push a button, and the door will open. We shall have the impression of entering a commodious room. It will not be necessary to crawl around stationary seats and trip over pumps and tunnels in the floor.

The seats will be light, movable chairs and the floor will be wide and flat. A portion of the roof will be made of a curved translucent material which will admit the health-giving rays of the sun and at the same time remove glare.'

A series of buttons would regulate the temperature and humidity to any desired condition of air. Another button would cause a concealed bed to emerge from a partition between passenger and engine compartments. Many passenger conveniences, such as lavatory facilities, could be incorporated without increasing the height or width of the car and by adding only slightly to its length. Furthermore, 'if other branches of engineering keep pace with the body men,' it was predicted that this car could be driven from any seat, the controls being carried or passed from place to place.

That car of the future may sound too visionary. But General Motors has five hundred engineers, physicists, mathematicians, and mechanics, headed by 'Boss' Kettering, who devote part of their time to making some such future possible. Chrysler Corporation has Fred Zeder and Carl Breer directing hundreds of other engineers along the same road. About one fifth of their aggregate time is on pure science or 'long shot' problems, another two fifths on more or less advanced engineering, and the final two fifths on the more bread-and-butter consultations with the various divisions. And Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., has predicted that if it were possible to put alongside the car of today the car of 1960, the difference would in all probability be just as striking as between the car of 1913 and that of 1941.

V

At present, however, that future seems less pressing than the immediate problem confronting the automobile industry — armaments.

Not so long ago we used to hear of a fabulous factory manufacturing baby

carriages. This factory was in Europe, across the Rhine. And, strange to say, no matter what went into this wondrous factory, no matter what the blueprints seemed to direct, instead of baby carriages there always came out machine guns.

This sleight-of-hand of production was the wonder of most of the world. To Americans it was arresting but not amazing. Wait until our automobile industry gets going, they said. Then you'll see a real production miracle.

Now, our automobile industry is going. It has enlisted wholeheartedly for the duration for the defense of this country. On October 25, nearly one hundred top-ranking officials of automobile and truck companies, parts, body, accessory, and tool manufacturers, met in Detroit with Defense Commission officials headed by William S. Knudsen. Mr. Knudsen said that tooling, production, and subassembly work on four hundred separate parts, including wings, tails, fuselages, and control instruments, were needed for bombers. On short notice the industry was asked to ensure Mr. Knudsen 100 per cent coöperation.

The automobile industry is peculiarly fitted to undertake this gigantic task of giving birth to millions of defense parts. We speak of a lawyer's lawyer, a banker's banker, and a doctor's doctor—specialists who can advise members of their own professions. In that sense the automobile industry of America is truly industry's industry. Its concern is not just automobiles, but machinery and steel and rubber and petroleum, countless other small industries, and above all organization and knowledge of the manufacturing process, the 'know-how.' That is why the automobile industry has been singled out by the Federal Government to undertake the greatest defense effort in our history. That is why it has been called in to get the job done.

No easy road lies ahead. Airplanes are not automobiles. They serve different purposes, have different parts, and

are built differently. To those who blandly ignore these differences, Mr. Sloan, chairman of the board of General Motors, has recently made answer.

'The essential element in mass production is the period of preparatory work or "make ready,"' he said. 'Only after this is completed can mass production, as it is popularly conceived, really begin. Even in the automobile industry, with its long experience in quantity production and its yearly model change, no substitute has been found for the many months of careful planning and preparation before production can be started on a new design. A year's intensive work is essential. Any expectation that miracles can be performed overnight will only lead to confusion in the program and to unnecessary disappointment. The realities must be faced.'

As Mr. Sloan pointed out, there is a fundamental difficulty in determining the kinds of equipment to be produced and their designs. Especially is this true under current conditions, for military technology is undergoing 'a revolution so far as types and specifications of war implements are concerned. Designs considered adequate yesterday are obsolete today. If, then, new designs become necessary, further delays are inevitable. With the essential technique of quantity production based upon careful preparation after approval of a design, even minor changes frequently require a rebuilding of tool equipment and a re-planning of the job.'

Although present plans call for the automobile industry's making 'Chinese copies' of airplanes rather than pioneering developments in them, the industry will turn its years of accumulated experience in one field to advantage in another. This will at first take place in the field of organization of production, plant layout, and flow of materials rather than in production itself. Then, as Army and Navy and aircraft men are persuaded that the production methods suggested by the automobile industry are superior,

they will be adopted. But progress will be made slowly as the intensive study of aircraft blueprints is translated by experienced automobile engineers and production men into the anticipated better production methods. For although automobile men have the 'know-how' of mass production, they are the first to acknowledge that they don't know it all.

Here are just a few of the problems that will be investigated. First, the use of spot welding in airplanes instead of riveting. There are estimated to be 440,000 rivets in each plane at a rule-of-thumb cost of ten cents a rivet, and the ability to spot-weld (by electric resistance) would save much time and expense. A new method of high-speed spot welding has been applied to bodies of the 1941 models so that as many as 6000 spot welds an hour can be attained. Shot welding will also be investigated, since it is said to take only one-fortieth the time to shot-weld stainless steel that it takes to rivet aluminum parts.

Next, the use of alloy-steel castings instead of forgings. In steel casting a cylinder sleeve for an airplane engine, some manufacturers — notably Ford — believe that much time, effort, and investment could be saved. Forging requires $2\frac{1}{2}$ times as much metal per sleeve, an investment of several hundred thousand dollars for machinery instead of about six thousand, besides far greater labor. These savings are all the more important since there exists a bottleneck in machinery in this country, and a potential bottleneck in steel.

The use of automobile methods in the manufacture of pistons will be investigated, since some pistons are now actually held to closer tolerances than aircraft pistons. Machines for balancing crankshafts are used to good advantage in the automobile industry and will probably be adopted for aircraft crankshafts. Some gears in aircraft design are similar to gears in automobiles, and made by the same type of machines. But automobile gears are shaved, a more

economical operation than the grinding of aircraft-engine gears — something else worth investigating.

Only management, research, and design departments and borrowed personnel at present link the bulk of these new operations to the automobile industry itself. Scarcely 10 per cent of a typical automobile plant's equipment — chiefly general-purpose tools such as lathes, milling, drilling, and gear-cutting machines — is considered adaptable to military products. Even aviation engines — fundamentally akin to those of the automobile — are so utterly unlike in detail as to call for tremendous batteries of new tools. They are as much alike, says Max Gilman, president of Packard and holder of the large Rolls-Royce engine contract, as a 'hat and pair of shoes.'

It is estimated that to produce 450 aircraft engines a month, of the 1200-horsepower type used in bombers and fighting planes, will require an investment in plant and equipment of \$25,000,000 and approximately 10,000 employees. By contrast it is possible today to produce 1500-1800 good automobile engines a day, of the 160-horsepower type, with an investment of \$10,000,000 and 3200 employees. Such is the difference between the Swiss-watch technique of aircraft and mass production of automobiles.

Will it be possible to speed up the manufacture of aircraft engines to something approaching that of automobiles? A lot will depend upon the performance expected of the aircraft engines, and whether it is decided we have both the time and the volume of aircraft production to design and manufacture new machines specially designed for mass aircraft volume. For it is the machines which will determine the ultimate speed of aircraft production, just as they did for the automobile.

Mr. Kettering has often referred to the fact that the automobile industry 'publishes' cars. That is, after months of

seeming lack of progress, months of assembling the material and days of setting the type, finally the presses start whirling and begin to 'publish' unit after unit in true mass-production fashion.

So it has been for automobiles. And so it will be at some time in the future for airplanes.

A friendly word of caution: results must not be expected overnight. Remember that Ford lost almost two years of sales in changing over from Model T to Model A. In fact, some automobile men believe that, just as our shipbuilding program has been placed on a five-year basis, it would be sounder to think of our completed aircraft program on some similar basis. In the meantime we shall be getting steadily increased aircraft production through the coöperation of the automobile industry. Allison, division of General Motors, has already sharply increased its production rate of aircraft engines. By the middle of 1941, Ford and Packard will begin turning out aircraft engines, and soon thereafter will be in quantity production. Aircraft parts and fuselages will be coming off the assembly line before the end of 1941. By the middle of 1942, in all probability, the industry will hit its stride and begin to 'publish' the components of airplanes if not the airplanes themselves.

Airplanes are not the only defense weapons the automobile industry will produce. It will help in the production of component parts of cannon, which after all, as Mr. Kettering has explained, is nothing but a method of transportation in reverse: 'It is transmitting something that the fellow who is going to get it doesn't want, in a way which he doesn't like.' Shells will be manufactured, — a relatively easy job, with a few well-trained mechanics and foremen, — as well as cartridge cases and fuses. There will be trucks and combat

cars, machine guns, artillery fire-control equipment, and tanks. In some of these, notably truck and combat cars and machine guns, there is very little new technique to be mastered. Here the improved automobile and truck production methods can fit directly into production for national defense.

In the case of tanks it is the 'know-how' of mass-production methods, which the automobile industry so eminently possesses, that is important. When K. T. Keller, president of Chrysler, was asked by Mr. Knudsen to manufacture tanks, he could reply, 'I should be glad to,' and turn loose on the job nearly 200 trained engineers who put together 186 pounds of blueprints on tank construction in $4\frac{1}{2}$ feverish weeks of activity. By September 1941, these 25-ton tanks will be rolling off the assembly line of a brand-new factory at a rate of five per eight-hour shift.

These factories which are rising and are about to rise on the skylines of Detroit and its satellite cities are a tribute by a thankful nation to the progress of the automobile industry. And they are tacit tribute, too, to the realization that while armies may once have moved on their stomachs, now they move by engine, in trucks, armored cars, tanks, and airplanes. There is hardly a single mule or horse in any of the infantry divisions today. Artillery is drawn by truck or tractor. And a single armored division contains no less than 2200 motor vehicles, including 400 tanks. The entire army, in April 1917, had only 3500 motor vehicles.

The encouraging part of it is that the automobile industry is undertaking this task with a greater capacity for production, with better tools and equipment, and with more 'know-how' of mass production than it has possessed at any other time in its history.

WE BUILD THE FUTURE

BY CARL JOACHIM FRIEDRICH

ALL of us who have followed the career of Mrs. Anne Morrow Lindbergh respect her literary accomplishments, her bravery and intelligence. Yet, because of her success in giving literary form to romantic adventure, her latest book, *The Wave of the Future*, is perhaps being questioned less seriously than it deserves. The author disarms criticism by urging the reader not to regard her as 'a specialist in history, economics or foreign affairs.'

Is the future a wave, as Mrs. Lindbergh describes it in her 'Confession of Faith'? Is it something outside of us which will sweep over us? Is there 'no fighting it'? Are we 'just children who could not fight against the gigantic roller that loomed up ahead suddenly'? The helpless determinism imposed by the use of these word pictures strikes at the root of Christian ethics. Our civilization has been built upon the conviction that the future is what *we*, each one of us, make it. The future of humanity is built out of many creative acts; we all participate in the shaping of it.

The bewilderment Mrs. Lindbergh seems to feel in the face of the future which she cannot comprehend results in her passive acceptance of all change. 'There is no sin,' she tells us, 'punished more implacably by nature than the sin of resistance to change. . . . To resist change is to sin against life itself.' In comparison with this sin, persecution, aggression, rape, and war sink into insignificance. They are sins too, to be sure, but they merely constitute the 'scum of the wave.'

But is not much of life resistance to

change? Surely it depends upon the direction of the change whether it is a 'sin' to resist it. To have resisted the change which was threatened in the assault of the Turks upon Vienna was surely no 'sin,' or the change which was resisted by the heroes of Thermopylae. On the other hand, Pilate's rejection of Christ was a sin, *if* we accept the Christian view. This 'if' is all-important. It shows that sin has meaning only in relation to the ideas we value. The mere fact that the Nazis represent change tells us nothing about whether or not we ought to oppose them.

Are Hitler & Co. — that is to say, Hitler and all those marching under his banner, from Stalin to the men of Vichy and the *Bund* in the bargain — simply the scum of the wave? Are they but the 'evil associates' of 'great ideas,' as Mrs. Lindbergh would have us believe? What are these great ideas? Unfortunately she never gives us even an inkling of what they may be. Presumably she herself is not sure. She feels a wave coming and she is frightened. No one can blame her for that; the spectacle of a world dominated by Hitler is terrifying. But that does not mean that we have to accept the changes which the dictators seek to bring about. For they are clearly the most extensive reactionary movement known to us in history. Far from supporting Mrs. Lindbergh's notion, the facts show us that the dictators would throw mankind back into feudalism. Tyranny is nothing new. The *Führer* principle is an attempt to disguise the reintroduction of the feudal system in

which serfs were bound to their lord by unquestioning loyalty. Is it not characteristic that this neofeudalism is strongest in those lands which still contain many feudal remnants — Germany, Italy, Spain, Russia, and Japan?

Mrs. Lindbergh would label the dictators 'part of a vast revolution,' but was not Napoleon also 'part of a vast revolution'? Were the British wrong in resisting him? Or were they right in asking the vital question: 'Is this still the revolution? Or have ideas been turned into tools of oppression and force? Is this still a forward march, or is it terrified reaction?' Not to make this vital distinction is romantic vagueness, the emotionalism of *Weltschmerz*. It is a very common confusion of historical perspective, and one assiduously promoted by the dictators, to term their movements an 'inevitable revolution.' But these historical analogies are not well worked out; for, if there is any comparison between the French Revolution and our own time, the Dantons and the Robespierres find their counterpart in the Trotskys, the Liebknechts, and the Lenins, and just as the reaction triumphed over them in the person of Napoleon Bonaparte, so reaction has triumphed over revolutionary socialism in the persons of Stalin, Mussolini, and Hitler. This *may* be the analogy; we cannot be sure about it.

We cannot be sure, because it is not yet clear what the direction of revolutionary socialism has been. That our industrial society is increasingly socialized, only a blind man could deny. Was revolutionary socialism, such as developed in Russia and Germany after the war, a part of that development? Very probably. But was it a change in the right direction? Who could be sure? Historical analogies are very dangerous, particularly when drawn with contemporary events in mind. The world around us is a world hard to see in perspective.

Both the French and the Russian revolutionaries saw themselves as fighting for democracy. They did not know how

to achieve their ends, and hence were overtaken by a bloody reaction, followed by imperial aggression. Mrs. Lindbergh, not recognizing the present as a reactionary phase, would like to clinch her argument by juxtaposing 'the old world of England, France and the United States to the new world of fascist Europe.' By putting it that way, she neglects the powerful forces working in the right direction here. She forgets that the only places where a man today can say and discuss freely what he thinks Marx, Lenin, Mussolini, and Hitler mean are England and the United States. What, then, about the new world of the United States? How can we build it, as she herself wishes us to do, if we accept her counsel of not resisting the fascist reaction and its corruption of the future?

We like Mrs. Lindbergh's frank avowal that if we do not better our civilization — our way of life and our democracy — there will be no use in trying to save it by fighting. But, while elder conservatives may think that we can save it merely by fighting, we of the younger generation have no such illusions. We ask another question: How can we better our civilization while the gang of dictators are at work? Look at America today as contrasted with only a few years ago. The resources urgently needed for social improvement have now to be expended for a colossal armament to break that very wave which Mrs. Lindbergh would have us ride.

What is even worse, many people are getting so agitated about certain groups in our midst that they advocate 'abandoning democracy temporarily in order to save it.' And what about the increasing tendency to call one's political opponent a dictator and a fifth-columnist? This all constitutes the impact of totalitarianism upon us. Surely we are entitled to ask: How can we build our future, as long as this reaction confronts us?

This does not mean that we think the job is done when Hitler has been defeated. Far from it. Thoughtful people

will never pretend that 'civilization can be "saved" by simply going to war.' It is certainly true that the most gigantic problems will face the world after it has emerged from the present reactionary phase. The collapse of the dictators will be followed by large-scale unemployment and economic dislocation. For, since they 'created' employment by preparing for war, bold thought will be required to project a reconstruction as vast as was the preparation for war and the destruction it brought.

No one recognizes that more clearly than the British. Indeed, unless all signs are deceiving, a great change is taking place in Britain. The common man is emerging. Democracy is on the march. We all realize — most of all the British themselves — that much was wrong with the British Empire and its social system. But this does not alter the fact that the British are now defending the future of freedom. They are defending the right of people to decide for themselves the direction in which they wish to go in the future, not as the defenseless victims of an inexorable fate, but as the responsible participants in a great task.

We wonder whether Mrs. Lindbergh would not, on further reflection, accept this interpretation herself. She finds eloquent words for a tribute to the gallantry of the British. But the British are not alone. There are millions among the various peoples that have fallen under the conqueror's heel who are sacrificing life and all to carry on the struggle. Mrs. Lindbergh evidently does not recognize their struggle as meaningful. In speaking of those who 'defend the good, the Christian, the democratic, the capitalistic world' she asserts: 'They are right, but only right relative to that small stage at which they are looking.' But why call the stage small upon which the drama of the Christian and humanist revolution has already been playing for two thousand years — and with the end not yet in

sight? There seems to be little justification for lumping together the capitalist and the Christian world, for surely the ethical principles of Christianity as exemplified in democracy far transcend capitalism, both in time and in space.

We cannot believe that Mrs. Lindbergh will not come to a sounder view of the present struggle. In her efforts to 'find a deeper and truer answer' she ventures the guess that the terrible upheavals of our time are due to 'some new and perhaps even ultimately good conception of humanity trying to come to birth.' True enough, but the dictators are seeking to prevent it. Ruthlessly suppressing the creative impulses in man, they are trying to turn the clock back. Against a progressive Germany, a liberal Italy, they marshaled the forces of a decaying feudalism, the frenzy of an obsolete nationalism. Mrs. Lindbergh's concluding paragraph shows her to be on the other side, our side. Reform, she writes, should be a reaffirmation of our beliefs.

It should be a reaffirmation of them, an extension of them to wider fields and deeper recesses. It need not mean abandoning our fundamental principles, but rather a reëxamination of them to determine whether we are following the dead letter or the living spirit which they embody. It should not mean forsaking the beacons which have led us in the past, but a rekindling of them. It should be essentially a life-giving process. In other words, it seems to me that a creative act is demanded of us. And like all acts of creation it will take labor, patience, pain — and an infinite faith in the future.

This is grand. It is the democratic view. It is the future.

And therefore, when Mrs. Lindbergh says that in this war the 'Forces of the Past' are fighting the 'Forces of the Future,' she is utterly wrong as she means it. For the dictators certainly stand for the past. In the light of her own conclusion, Democracy, the social democracy of continuous reform, embodies the Forces of the Future — the Future we build.

WHAT BILLS DO YOU PAY?

BY MONA GARDNER

I

INVARIABLY, inexorably, the second of January arrives, bringing with it the usual delayed Christmas cards and the usual stack of bills for all those beautiful, necessary, extravagant, vital things you bought in December — underwear, eggs, toys, furs, groceries, porcelain, doctor's house visit, coal, poultry, club dues, milk, millinery, and the gold inlay for Junior's tooth.

What do you do? Sit right down and write checks for them all? Or do you add the disconcerting totals, flush, and find you've gone and slipped over the limit again? If so, *what* bills do you pay first?

Does it go something like this? 'H'm-m, that underwear was mostly gifts, and I've got to get some for myself next month — I'd better pay it now. Eggs and milk and groceries — we use them every month, so they've got to be paid. Poultry — well, we'll be eating corned beef now the holidays are over; I'll let that slide until February. Porcelain? Oh, the department store is rich — it can wait. If I send the furrier a small check, that ought to hold him a while. The coal — there's no escape; that's a *must*. Besides, there's that five per cent discount I might as well get. Club bill, of course! We don't want our names posted for everyone to see. H'm-m, where *can* I pare down? Ah, the dentist! We shan't be going to *him* for another six months. He can wait! So can the doctor. Besides, fifteen dollars for a house visit! It's outrageous; he wasn't in the house a half hour.

There, that's all. . . . Oh no, here's that plagued millinery bill. I have to pay it. I simply *have* to if I'm going to get a new hat for the wedding next month. . . .'

If that is a cross section of your first-of-the-month mental processes, you aren't the only one in town. Exactly half the families you know are going through this same delicate juggling act. Nine out of ten of them do as you do — pay bills that friends might hear about; pay the local grocer because he's a little man and you're sorry for him, and let the department store in town wait because that's a big company and you're not sorry for it; pay creditors whose merchandise is wanted soon again, ease others into next month's hope chest, and let physicians and dentists go until the last.

Not only in your town is this happening every month, but all over the United States, especially in big cities, especially in country-club suburbs. Only 50 per cent of charge-account customers settle all their bills within a thirty-day period, according to the National Credit Bureaus of America. The remaining 50 per cent let their bills drag on sixty days, ninety days, and even one hundred and twenty days. A few wealthy eccentrics here and there elect to pay their bills only twice a year.

Weather affects our paying habits, geography still more so, and nationality the most of all. And, no matter who we are or where, we are apt to pay the first

two or three bills that come in and stuff the others in a drawer. That's why so many stores close their books on the twenty-seventh of the month. They want their bill in your mailbox early on the morning of the first.

If we are Swedish, say, or Norwegian, and we live up around the Great Lakes, around Minneapolis or St. Paul, we pay on the button. We are almost fanatical about paying a bill the day it is presented. Credit managers in this area know a bill mailed on the thirty-first will materialize into a payment-in-full check on the second. If we are Chinese, English, or Scotch, we are just as meticulous. If we are Jewish, we may argue and postpone and ask for reductions. If we are Italian, we are the slowest and most uncertain to pay of all.

In northern climates, straight across the country, check writing is not regarded as a chore. As we go south it seems to become an exertion: the farther south, the greater the exertion. In Texas, Alabama, Kentucky, Virginia, or the Carolinas our checks are just as good *eventually* as northern checks are. But *eventually* means three months, or four months, afterwards, and a 'By God, suh, how dare you remind me of that bill!'

We pay bills enthusiastically in October, November, and December, department-store records show. We shudder, but are gallant, during January and February. Once March gets settled, though, and spring steals our minds, we slide. We slide in April, slide a little more in May, until it's a regular toboggan in June. As for July, August, and September, they are the teeth-gritting months for stores.

No one seems to know what there is in a frosty October wind plucking leaves from trees that effects the change, but something in the melancholy spectacle makes us rush to pay our bills. Perhaps it is the touch of the squirrel in all of us, for as we pay we also buy more and more and more of a winter hoard, and thus begin another credit cycle all over again.

Did you ever wonder why all the big fur sales are held in August? It isn't chance. It isn't even a heroic effort to drag customers in during the big slack. It is an adroit manœuvre to make our two enthusiasms coincide — the enthusiasm of daily possession with the seasonal enthusiasm for paying bills. We wear the furs, get the bill, take another glance in the mirror, and write the furrier a check.

The same furs purchased in January have psychological odds dead against prompt, or even full, payment. First of all, they face bill-cluttered months full of Christmas carry-overs, state and federal income taxes. After that they face spring — teasing, tugging spring that can make a mink coat into a rag. Anyway, it's mothball day, and away goes the coat into storage. Also, away go our thoughts and money for spring clothes.

Do credit managers pace and moan over those uneven collections? No, not these days. They sit quietly and quote to the last decimal, while they show you on vast charts just what it costs the store to 'loan' you money during these seasonal enthusiasms of yours. It is another cost like advertising, taxes, wide aisles, and uniformed doormen. And, along with the others, it goes into the mark-up.

If you and the other charge customers are the kind who pay promptly, and an equal proportion pay cash, the chances are this 'credit loan' mark-up is about 3 per cent. But if, for instance, the shop is a swank specialty one where 86 per cent of its customers purchase on credit running as long as six months, then the mark-up swoops accordingly. In other words, you don't get credit for nothing. It costs money. Remember the 5 per cent discount you *don't* get from the coalman if you take your time about paying?

As for the doctor, he also includes the high cost of waiting in his mark-up. Part of his fifteen dollars for a house visit is to take care of those four, five, or six

months of delayed payment. It must, or he'd be at the bank arranging for a loan to tide him over his grocery bills until you or your neighbors get around to paying him.

Incidentally, department stores are very chary of the amount of credit they extend to physicians and dentists, not because doctors lack the will to pay, but because their patients do. Many doctors feel they are lucky if they can collect 75 per cent of the bills they send out. No department store could operate on such a loss.

Credit men are quick to say it is largely a doctor's own fault that his collections are so poor. They say he is a careless business man and seldom investigates anything about a patient's credit rating. Nor does he pool his credit knowledge and experience with other doctors in any sort of medical clearing bureau.

Doctors say, 'Unethical,' and credit men say, 'Common sense, and the surest bulwark against socialized medicine! . . . Set a patient's arm,' the credit men continue, 'give him sulfanilamide for pneumonia, and handle any other emergencies as they occur, but don't start long and expensive treatments until prices are discussed, payment dates arranged and agreed upon.'

The pros and cons fly, but meanwhile doctors admit that they are caught in a nasty crossruff — no payments, and no sympathy

II

Charge accounts have become one of the most comfortable conditions of present-day living. Instead of using money now, we pass out our word of honor to pay. We buy radios, pearls, porch furniture, station wagons, fur coats, and even vacations upon our word of honor. In fact, our whole economic setup right now is based upon this single theme — man's trust in other men, belief in the fundamental honesty of the other fellow to the extent of giving, in 1939, some

eight billion dollars' worth of charge-account credit. This works out at slightly more than twenty times the retail trust given and received in 1920.

Twenty years ago a credit man's trust was a gimlet-eyed affair. It scrutinized bank balances for substantial totals and looked for a listing in either the *Social Register* or *Dun and Bradstreet* before it considered you trustworthy. Today a listing in the telephone book and some sort of job, even if it pays only twenty-five dollars a week, is often enough to establish a charge account. And paying each monthly bill in full within thirty days for a year is quite enough to establish A 1 credit rating.

Consequently the desire and demand for credit have blossomed and expanded these past few years far beyond any economist's predictions. Certainly beyond what he considers sound.

Last year, these economists point out, one third of all retail sales in the country were charged. That's a powerful total to write against trust. The figure this year will be higher, they say, for installment sales alone for January 1940 show a 40 per cent increase over similar sales in January of the preceding year.

The economists quite frankly shake their heads over this. Credit, they say, has become too easy for safety. They talk, a little bleakly, of 'erosion of the consumer' and about 'wasting consumer assets.'

'What, a new hat a waste of assets!' you scoff — and, like an average consumer, go right downtown and ask to open a charge account.

When you do this, three questioning C's line up in the credit manager's mind — your character, capacity, and capital. Their importance to him is exactly in the order named.

If you happen to have all three, you are a dream come true: you can take your pick of charge accounts. You'll even have stores writing and asking you to open one with them.

Otherwise the present-day credit man-

ager is primarily concerned with character. Don't confuse this with personality. The credit manager long ago learned not to. One astute New Yorker, who has been sitting behind a credit desk for years, says the deadbeats who come to him invariably have delightful and charming personalities, *the* most delightful and charming. So the credit manager doesn't care how gracefully you turn a phrase or how eagerly you listen to him. Your character, as he considers it, is actually your will to pay. He has his own instinctive formula for judging that. But your past record in paying either adds into or subtracts from the equation.

Capacity is your ability to pay from income — the margin you have to spend over and above living expenses. On a salary of \$35 a week your capacity is somewhat strained. On \$100 a week it expands. But of course, unless it is accompanied by character, you are considered a poor credit risk even with an income of \$500 a week. In fact, you'd find yourself paying cash.

Many men on such an income do, especially in New York City. A smart dress shop there thinks nothing of refusing to give an executive's wife credit, but will open an account for a \$25-a-week stenographer working in his office, simply on her character. They know, naturally, that the stenographer will spend only a tenth of what the executive's wife will spend; but in one case there's a will to pay, and in the other the will is weak.

But suppose your character is all that it should be. Then your capacity determines the amount of credit you receive in a particular store. It also decides how many other charge accounts you can open in your town and the neighboring towns.

Two accounts are a safe average, credit men say, for the \$25 or \$35 salary. On each of these accounts you would be allowed to charge up to \$50. The \$100-a-week salary rates five, six, and even seven accounts. The charge limit here

is probably \$100 a month in each store. On a \$10,000-a-year salary there is no ceiling on the amount of your charges or number of accounts.

Not that the credit manager ever tells you your dollar limit in so many words — that is, not unless you bump into it headfirst by rash overcharging. He merely sets this limit, and marks it on your card as a guide to his clerks, as his own private signal of danger. He has arrived at the figure after studying the source of your income and the number of your obligations, all of which come out and are checked by credit investigators when you open your first account.

It's all down from then on — your income, your way of living, the maids you employ, the private schools your children attend, all are itemized in your file in the local branch of the national organization of 1354 credit bureaus, and are available to some 180,000 members of this organization.

The chances are that you won't crowd your limit the first month you use your account, nor the second, nor the third. And you are careful to pay your bills promptly within thirty days. Thus you establish yourself, for the time being, as a good account.

What happens, then, if you suddenly lose your heart to a negligee, an evening wrap, and a street dress all in the same month, and all of them well over and above your regular monthly purchases? You'd probably get them and no questions asked. The credit manager is human and understands the gusts of temptation. But a little warning signal would go up on your card in the credit office, and your payment the following month would be watched. Partial payment would get you by as long as you held down on new charges.

If, however, you paid promptly in full, you could even come in and double the extra total the following month. And still nothing would be said. But a second danger signal would go up on your card. There would undoubtedly be a quick

telephone call, before delivery, to the office of the local branch of the retail credit association to ask the position of your charges at other stores. Provided there were no alarming symptoms there and your payment was still regular, you could go on exceeding your limit in this store indefinitely.

But suppose that first large over-charge wasn't met the following month. Suppose you came in and saw another negligee, still another frock, and a half-dozen accessories you simply had to have, and started buying them. The charges wouldn't be refused, exactly. You'd just be asked to step up to the credit office.

There the credit manager would lean back, bounce his fingers against each other lightly, and ask you to tell him how you plan to handle the payments. If, for instance, you tell him you've inherited money, expect a bonus, or have sold some property, you'd have his instant congratulations. But still, you'd give him a check for last month's bill right then and there if you wanted the new purchases delivered the following day. He has heard about inheritances before; half the people who can't pay, or won't, try to dazzle him with their expectations.

If, however, the negligee, the frock, and the accessories were just overpowering temptations and you hoped, in some way or other, to manage to pay for them out of the same normal monthly income, that would be a different story. Your purchases would be refused. Tactfully, but candidly, the credit manager would save you from your own foolishness.

He does it every day. He reasons, advises, and reminds. He suggests: 'Well, now, you bought a street dress and a suit and an afternoon frock last month and the month before. Why don't you wait until spring and get your next street outfit then?' He telephones a husband and says: 'Your wife is in the store and has just bought five negligees. Shall we just *not* deliver four of them?'

He telephones a mother and tells her: 'Your daughter is here. Do you want her to buy three evening dresses today?'

This is not fake paternalism. It is the new creed of prevention which all competent and reputable credit men practise today. They want your business, but they want it to be sound. They don't want you to get in a jam; you cease to be a customer when you do. So they act as financial nurses, watching you always with a trained eye for any alarming symptoms, in order to apply treatment quickly before the case becomes severe.

III

There is no better example of this preventive care than the sound job credit men are performing in hospitals these days. They know you resent being ill, that you don't want to afford it once you're better again, that you haven't budgeted for the emergency, and that you feel you are being overcharged anyway. So they take pains to fit your bill to your income.

You can't run up an unpredictable bill any more. You can't say, the day you are leaving the hospital, 'But I didn't dream it would cost so much! Why was I put in such an expensive room? Why did I have so many X-rays? Why this item? Why that one?'

The credit man talks it all over before you enter, with you if you are not too ill, or with close relatives. He outlines and details the various types of service you may have in a ward, in four-bed and two-bed rooms, in a private room, and in a de luxe suite. He quotes prices that run from three to seventy-five dollars a day. You select the one you can afford. You take your choice between ordinary nurses and a special. You are even told the approximate number of X-rays and extra treatments you will need, and their price. And you give him a check for one or two weeks' stay before you cross the threshold.

Naturally, if yours is an emergency

case, no reputable hospital is going to tell the surgeon to keep his scalpel poised until your credit record is checked. Treatment is immediate and thorough: you are even put into a private room if that is what you seem to want. Next day, perhaps, rates are discussed. If the cost of a private room is going to fret and worry you, the credit man will suggest your moving to less expensive accommodations. Your nursing, medical treatment, and food all remain the same, though, no matter what room you occupy. And there you have the real reason why hospital maintenance runs so high.

The credit man doesn't always explain this, although he should — that it costs the modern, well-equipped city hospital exactly seven dollars a day to care for you. In other words, if you pay anything less than seven dollars a day you are receiving that proportion of your treatment at the hospital's expense. When you pay eight and ten dollars a day you are balancing the precarious scales and contributing medical aid to those who can't afford it.

The hospital credit man's day is crowded with people asking for reductions, for extensions, and even for rebates after a relative has died. Curiously enough, few patients try to misrepresent themselves and take expensive rooms when they can't afford it. The opposite is the rule — asking for ward treatment when they are able to afford semi-private or private accommodations. Many women misrepresent their husband's salary, making it less, or deny owning an automobile even when it is parked at the curb. One big New York hospital found that a man in one of its wards had something like \$175,000 in bank deposits and stocks. He had entered on a four-dollar-a-day ward plan and later begged for a two-dollar rate. He was furious when he was moved into a private room and his ward bed was given to a young clerk with a slim pocketbook.

One Italian girl came back to this

hospital, where her father had died, and explained that she couldn't pay the \$300 still due on the bill because she had spent all her father's insurance money on a big funeral for him. While the credit man was gulping over this sequel, the young woman hurried on to ask him for a \$250 rebate on the portion that had already been paid, so that she could buy a tombstone — not only asked, but demanded the money with tears and screams. She didn't get it, but neither did the credit man get the \$300 still due the hospital.

It took millions of dollars of unpaid hospital bills to teach credit men that the longer they let their bills extend after the patient's discharge, the less chance there was of collection. Now they take advantage of the psychological factor of gratitude for recovery while it is still fresh, and find that collections have tremendously improved.

The thing that has brought many a hospital out of the red these past few years has been the credit man's system of selling hospitalization as openly as a merchant sells a coat or a dress. You pick it out, not blindly, but after looking it over and thinking about it. Also, you get good, practical advice as you make the selection, because the credit man, unlike a salesman, is wholly concerned with selling you what you can afford.

Don't expect all credit men to do your thinking for you, though. Many won't, especially those in installment houses. With few exceptions, this type deals in the present, in today, and in today's order in the hand. Your future orders and good will are just a couple of intangibles out in the bush. 'Never mind what brand of agony you go through paying, or borrowing to pay,' they shrug, 'we have your name on the dotted line. Either pay or we repossess.'

The classic example of this type of credit is the case which came to light recently just outside New York City. An installment piano house sold an \$800 instrument to a man employed as a furnace fireman in an apartment house

at \$80 a month. Because he had five young children and a wife, the local relief bureau was allowing him an extra \$6.00 a month to buy milk.

No one knows yet how the fireman ever planned in his own mind to make the payments. Probably he was emotionally involved because his eldest girl had musical talent, and, evidently, he was better with a shovel than with figures. However, the piano credit man knew how to add, yet he let the contract be signed, and it was he who authorized repossession two months later when payments weren't met. Having received two payments, and having repossessed the piano, this credit man went right on hounding the fireman for interest money due on his contract until authorities heard about the case and stopped it abruptly.

IV

It is a mistake to believe that store collections are varied according to the financial rating of customers — that small-fry accounts are harried to allow the very, very rich infinite latitude. Only in the case of a handful of old accounts of long standing are customers of big stores allowed to pay only twice a year.

The surprising thing, credit managers say, is that the very rich pay their bills more promptly these days than those with moderate incomes. Instead of being vague, unbusinesslike, with a prima donna's temper, like the petted darling of a wealthy husband in the '90s, today's petted darling sends her bills en masse to her husband's office and lets his secretary write the checks the first of each month.

However, collection procedure on overdue accounts is the same with all customers. The letters are form letters, written usually on a mechanical typewriter, employing the same words to tell Mrs. \$25 or Mrs. \$2500 that her account is overdue.

The credit manager in one of New York's exclusive dress shops explains his system: 'We never vary between a tycoon's wife and a stenographer once an account is overdue. It is the same right through the alphabet. After no payment for three months, we start our form letters. The first collection letter is a mild reminder. If, after a month, this brings no response, we send a second letter asking settlement. A few weeks later a third and stronger letter goes out. By this time nearly six months have gone by, and if there is no response or explanation of any kind we turn the account over to a collection agency.'

Why doesn't he start his reminder letters the second month? He knows that customers would buy elsewhere. His store wants the business, even if it has to wait for its money.

There seems to be no rule about paying a fashionable dressmaker. She makes her own rules, and most of these by instinct, to fit individual cases. One chic designer in New York City is known to have a safe full of customers' jewels as security against overdue bills. Another one calls her customers 'January and June accounts,' meaning that they pay when their dividends come in. A Philadelphia dress shop says many of its 'main-line' customers regularly pay one hundred dollars every month, are never caught up, and never stop buying.

The people who run out on their bills are amazingly few. Bad-debt losses, according to the *Retail Survey* made by the Department of Commerce, amount to only $\frac{41}{100}$ of one per cent a year. Expressed thus, the loss sounds infinitesimal. Yet translate that $\frac{41}{100}$ of one per cent into dollars, and it becomes an overwhelming amount of money, something like \$32,000,000 lost annually to deadbeats and cheats.

Individual merchants do not complain, however, for when the losses are broken down it means that a department-store owner, for instance, takes a bad-debt loss amounting to around 28 cents on

every \$100 worth of business his store does in a year. Furniture losses run somewhat higher, around \$1.06 on the same unit of business. By far the most calamitous are jewelry charge accounts. Not only are the payments exceedingly slow, but bad-debt losses soar to \$4.43 on \$100, which, of course, does not help the price of diamonds any.

Between the deadbeats and the people who pay, even though it be slowly, there is another group which manages to produce most of the credit headaches. They are the honest, but optimistic, people who overextend themselves, who run into an emergency such as sickness, a death in the family, or losing a job, and who simply cannot pay despite the best will in the world. These aren't necessarily people in low income brackets. They are army officers, college professors, lawyers, teachers — but always married, always with a family. Single persons, credit men say, rarely get in financial jams.

In other days these people were hounded by heavy-handed collection agents who thought nothing of walking pickets on the pavement before the delinquent's house wearing such signs as 'We Get Blood from a Turnip' or of backing a placarded hearse up in front of the house and parking it there. Judgments and garnisheeing salary were the next steps. It was not unusual to hear of good honest men committing suicide rather than face such music.

The picture is quite different today. A man up to his eyebrows in foolish debt is rescued from phrase-slashing collection agents, from mortification and ruin. He can take his troubles to his local credit bureau and become a part of a new debt-pooling system whereby he liquidates his top-heavy debts in peace and without legal judgments.

One of the new-school credit men in New York City, A. J. Worsdell, Jr., who is in charge of the Adjustment Bureau of the Associated Retail Credit Men, started this pooling plan several years

ago. He persuaded creditors to pool their debts with him and let him do the collecting from one debtor. He then worked out with the debtor a set sum of monthly payments — five, ten, or twenty dollars, or whatever could safely be spared from bare living expenses, so as not to drive the man farther into debt. As this money came in, Worsdell divided it, proportionately, among the creditors.

The process was slow, and long-drawn-out, but it got the bills paid and saved the debtor's reason, which was the reverse of what happened when half-a-dozen creditors harassed him simultaneously. So effective has this pooling system become that credit bureaus all over the country are now using it.

It is also the basis of the Wage Earners' Amortization Amendment of the new Chandler Act. This permits the wage earner (defined in this instance as an individual who works for a salary of less than \$3600 yearly) to arrange to amortize his personal bills over a period of time. In one Tennessee district where it was tried, 814 out of a group of 2600 debtors paid back personal debts amounting to \$343,000.

Worsdell's office is flooded with letters from people all over the country who want him to straighten out their debts. A university professor from Pennsylvania, receiving a salary of \$8000 a year, says that his doctor and grocery bills, bank loans, house mortgage, insurance, and clothes bills have accumulated to the point where he is paying \$400 a month on them, and is faced with the necessity of borrowing from loan companies to cover living expenses. A navy officer's wife writes from California that out of a salary of \$395 a month her family of four has only \$112 a month for living expenses. The remainder goes to pay back nine loan companies from whom she and her husband have borrowed, successively, to liquidate previous loans.

These are only two of many similar cases. Behind all of them is a big *why*

hammering. *Why* are we steadily pledging our future income for our present needs? *Why* are we always behind? *Why* do grocery stores have to give 54 per cent of their customers open credit if they want their business? *Why* are innumerable loan companies and credit unions flourishing on the business of lending us money to pay other debts? *Why* is there such a hairline between solvency and insolvency?

Sociologists tell us there are two reasons.

One set calls this the Debtor Era — the era when it is fashionable to be in debt. Twenty years ago it was thriftless, un-American, disgraceful, in fact, to borrow money for consumer goods. To-day it has become a commonplace practical necessity of everyday life. It lets the family keep up with those irritating Joneses.

These same sociologists say that as long as the government spends twice its income individuals feel that they can do the same. There is no assurance now as there was a decade ago, they point out, that savings from denials, insurance, bonds, will bring returns tomorrow in dollars of similar buying power. Feeling this vaguely, families are inclined to buy tangible things — vacuum cleaners, Oriental rugs, motorcars, air conditioning — up to the hilt of their income, and even on the installment plan.

Also, the government program of social insurance counteracts some of the hazards of accidents, widowhood, and sickness in old age. People expect to be taken care of, so those who are none too provident eat, drink, and pile up pleasant memories for the future.

The other set of sociologists say that the American family has been plunged too precipitously into a cash economy system. Two generations have seen the passing of the household garden, or-

chard, chicken coop, and hogpen as subsidiaries to the family's income. Even the woodshed has gone. Partial family subsistence on these brought a stabilizing influence on expenses.

Now, living is based on wages and cash income. Even the farmer buys his building material for cash instead of taking it from his land. His carpenter's wages are cash instead of exchange of labor.

Most families simply haven't adjusted themselves yet (as industry is trying to) to the inevitability of rise and fall of business cycles and to the necessity of providing against this fluctuation. There is some question whether they ever will. A large proportion of the population, having become thoroughly inured to debt during the past few years, have found that it isn't as bad as they thought.

To keep consumer credit within safe bounds there is considerable talk now of establishing a central credit institution in each community. Its function would be more specific than the present credit-rating bureau. Every debt would clear through it in the local community — grocery, coal, and dress accounts, bank and motorcar loans, everything.

Each case would be an individual one considered against time and place, and would be based upon income and future expectations. A man wouldn't, or couldn't, borrow through eight or nine sources and disastrously overextend himself. At least 25,000,000 families in the United States, credit men agree, would be better off if they had such impersonal advisory service about spending.

There is a growing conviction among educators that social mathematics and a study of consumer credit deserve a place in the curriculum of all schools to teach the young of the country the uses of credit, and so enable them to establish their own sound purchasing limit.

GROMPA SAMYEL'S SUPPER

BY OTIS FERGUSON

I

I REMEMBER the Old Gentleman best in his hale years, around the sixties, when he was still eating his head off and hiding his false teeth behind the hymnbook — quite a bit daft, but about as easy fooled as a steel trap. My Grompa Samyel. He had come over from the North of Ireland with his young bride and with a letter to some countryman already settled up in one of the Connecticut mill towns. He had become a machine-tool maker and bred a good-sized family of boys and girls intimately acquainted with the back of his hand. But by the time they had grown up to be my uncles and aunts, and had made or married prosperity and so naturally wouldn't have the old duffer cluttering up their atrocious houses, my father had decided that farming was the life, and bought a place.

Well, the Old Gentleman had originally been one of a huge litter of farmer's sons, whacking away at the old sod. So when, after an honorable career, he found one day that he was mistaking a right-hand stud for a left-hand die and had a hundred and seventeen dollars tucked away in the sock, he retired and came to us on the farm.

The Old Gentleman was worth his weight in heavy cream and fresh eggs the first few years. He had odd bits of lore that came in handy, such as which side of a cow the cow expects to be milked on, and that this is different with horses as you come into the stall — you come in on a horse's wrong side and

it isn't always certain you'll have any of your own left. He went about chores from dawn till dark like a good seaman coiling down a line — ease with precision. We were just a nest of brats growing up, tying knots in his shirt-tails and deviling around on any bit of job we were set, but he moved among us serene in his patience and forgiveness.

He was in league with all dumb creatures, never startling or upsetting them. His tact was endless. My father had been stuck with a wicked old piece of crowbait cow we called Old Bossie. She had a rolling wild eye and horns cut down to nubs. She was brown mostly. She walked, ate, and drank like any other cow, and she gave milk. That is, she *made* milk; but giving wasn't her idea. You had to take it.

The Old Gentleman was the only one who could come near her. I was milking hell out of the other cows from the age of eight, but never out of Old Bossie. With her it wasn't a matter of the milking technique at all. You had to distract her attention.

Well, Grompa would go in as smooth as silk, smelling as much like a cow as anything up the line of stanchions, and fondle and pat the old water-buffalo until she'd hike up a cud and start going over it as if to say, 'What's your proposition?' Then he'd say, 'So, Boss — so, Bossie,' and edge gently in with his milk pail, and she'd kick him halfway through the window.

Other times, with a certain whimsey,

she would keep shifting cuds as meek as a Christian, until Grompa Samyel had pulled a gentle eight quarts or so into the pail between his knees. And then she would execute a motion that was too quick for the eye to follow but resulted in leaving the empty bucket hanging on one of her evil old nubs and the Old Gentleman sprawled in the trough behind, dung from ear to ear.

You know what *you'd* do after you got up out of it. But do you know what he would? He would go back, 'So, Boss — so, Bossie, now,' and drain off the last dribbles of milk, careful and thorough, because if you left a half pint in her udder the old girl would soon get the screaming staggers.

Eventually, of course, a way was figured out. Old Bossie had the stanchion next to the wall of the cowshed anyway. We took a big cinch-strap, nipped in when she was thinking of something else, and lashed those two wicked hind legs of hers together like a survivor to a spar. For several milkings, night and morning, there was an absence of explosions where Grompa was creaking away on his stool and pulling the stuff gently into his bucket — outside of the leather rubbing and chafing as O.B. would try to punt him, first right, then left. She didn't chew any cud at all, and her eyes were rolling from side to side and red enough to set the place on fire.

But one night we heard the leather on the cinch-strap creaking pretty hard, and Grompa saying 'So, Boss — now, girl'; and the next thing we saw was milk in the air like a fall of snow and all the cows in the shed throwing their weight around and bringing their stupid feet down hard wherever there was a sign of life. We got clear in a rush and looked for the Old Gentleman. He was milk from head to toe except where the bucket showed, and the bucket was squashed in like a run-over tomato can. It was between the Old Gentleman and Old Bossie, and it was squashed be-

cause she was on top of him for fair. She had been swaying around back and forth and pulling at the stanchion to glare back at whatever it could be that had her, and figured out for herself that anything was better than this. So she just took a couple of practice sways and bounced off the wall over onto the Old Gentleman. She just naturally let go and fell on him.

Memory throws a haze over what we did after that. Reason would say we either put her in a sling or nailed her to the wall, but I seem to remember some talk about a diver's suit — and which went into it at milking time, Grompa or O.B., I can't tell you now. I do know that he milked her to the day she died, and that she died before he did.

II

I never heard him use a word you couldn't call gentle. But we have a picture of him in the family album putting a shocking amount of leather onto old Dolly, our first horse. Dolly was a mare that had also been sold my father with the farm and stock. She had very few original ideas, but what she had she held. One was that when an automobile approached, while she was still mooching around a curve, she should throw up in front, down in back, cramping the front wheels of the buggy under until the buggy turned over, and then gallop for twenty-odd yards with seven Fergusons, aged two to ten, underneath in their go-to-church clothes and screaming like the choir of hell in a welter of muck, blood, and shoe polish. And then she'd fall to eating grass, fallen telegraph wires, and the nasturtiums of the richest Congregational deacon in town.

Another idea she had was when she got hitched into the mowing machine. Now there's an instrument to stay away from. Iron wheels over uneven ground, and an iron seat right over a cutter bar tearing along enough to cut your leg

off if you get thrown. My father never let me near it, and, considering Dolly's temperament and mine, he was a wise man.

He was patient too, but not like the Old Gentleman. For there were limits to my father, and I've seen him thrown from that iron seat and hanging an inch from the cutter bar by Dolly's crupper and still trying mightily to kick her in the rump at the same time. I could run Dolly in the big hayrake. She didn't really have what you could call an idea about the rake, but she had things she could do. When she heard me start to dump a load she could imagine she felt a tug on the reins, and stop dead in the middle; when I would try to pull the ratchet loose to keep from breaking my leg, she could think that this, plus a whack of the loose end of the reins across her backside, was the word 'giddap.' So she'd back in a panic and then correct it in even more, and start up with the rake clanking and jumping like forty iron bells, and then, in her wild fright at the noise, cut for the barn, where she could remember that she had once been fed and spent a quiet night.

Dolly's other main idea was about marshy ground. Here the soil is black and sticky, and the grass leaps up like bamboo. Here the knives in the cutter should move at their best speed — to attain which the wheels to which they are geared should move faster, and for this we relied on Dolly. But the minute Dolly would feel the extra pull of the cutter bar she would slow up and cast an anxious look back to see if my father was still with the outfit. This would clog up everything and enrage my father. He had to keep the whip in his teeth when the going was bumpy, but when that fool horse slowed down enough to give him back his balance she also gave him a chance to let loose of the seat with one hand and raise a welt like a muscle on her rump. At which point she would give a

terrified leap into the collar; my father would have to grab hold for dear life and let go the cutter bar, which would, of course, slice into a hummock the size of an igloo, and wedge there. Whereupon, if the harness held, Dolly would feel the unwonted strain and sit down.

Well, that business in that marshy meadow is what I was coming to on the picture we have of Grompa Samyel lacing it into one of the creatures. Grompa knew if Dolly got a chance to throw my father that doubtful look the machinery would begin to jam; he knew that from there on out it was a tossup whether the machine took off from the ground completely with my father in amongst the scissors. But the most important thing was that that grass had to come down to make hay. So they divided the labor. My father held the reins and the cutter bar, and the Old Gentleman held the whip, running alongside.

On the day the picture was taken, they were moving gradually in on a square in which a nest of hornets had been upset, and the boy hornets were just sort of hanging around on the corners to see if anybody wanted to make something of it. So in the picture the both of them have bags over their heads, with crude eyeholes. I still wish we had it in motion. The Old Gentleman would get the whip up over his head like the Ten Commandments, and if his heart quaked, his arm showed it not. So there is my father, humming along as fast as that iron deathtrap ever moved, trying to see through the bag and keep out of the cutter bar, and there is the Old Gentleman galumphing through the marsh as though on separate surfboards, and actually whaling old Dolly around her behind with a seven-foot whip until she wouldn't sit down again that day or likely any other.

It was a great day, but you could always embarrass the Old Gentleman horribly by pulling out the picture. He knew in his heart that he wouldn't

hurt a fly. But there he was, with a sack over his head like the Ku Klux Klan, larruping away at old Dolly for all to see, like a bosun with a cat.

He was a very patient man when it was himself had to put up with whatever it was. When it was the good of the land you were talking about, he had as quick a hand as ever grabbed a stick. If all the creatures under his care had gone measure for measure with him on the golden rule, he would have led a happy enough life; but we just naturally ran to animals that weren't normal, so he was always being belted, fooled, and fallen on.

III

It was after we moved to another farm with more acres and more cows that the Old Gentleman began to crack up. Not any way noticeable — just now and then he'd forget which way from the barn the house was, and bring up in the middle of the state road that ran past the mailbox, athwart the traffic. The farm kept losing money, and the good horse of a team would fall through the dung trap and finally have to be shot after twenty-four hours with tackles, ropes, blankets, hot water, and 'Up, Dick!' So my father one day went scouting for a job he heard was open, in the middle of the haying season.

It was me and the Old Gentleman alone for a while. That is, it was the two of us and a mare we'd picked up somewhere for when we could hire out the team. She wasn't an old horse, at least no older than I was, and she didn't have any of these horse ideas — only a poor sense of timing.

We had the south meadow down early in the week, I remember; got it turned and windrowed ready for the wagon. For an old man and a boy we were doing a pretty clip. I would fork it up and Grompa would build the load, tromping it down and locking the corners as none of the rest of us could. He'd build a load of hay like a shredded-

wheat biscuit, and take a quiet pride in seeing a good 10 per cent of it scrape off as it larruped dead-centre through the big barn door — the load just naturally built too high and wide for any door in the county.

We'd got one load off and were pretty well up on the second, in the late, hot afternoon, when the thunderheads began to show off over the east woodlot. If we weren't going to leave hay under water we'd have to make it all on the one load, and build her clean up to the telephone wires. So we laid out to stretch it, as the air got still and yellow and the barn swallows began to get nervous, flying in low wide circles. Suddenly from nowhere there would be an abrupt clap of cool breeze, and then the sun weltering down again.

We had that load up pretty high, and the mare began to figure it was all over, and feeding time, and get uneasy about it. But it was up to the Old Gentleman to break her neck with the reins if she started to cramp for home, and, what with getting a good pitch placed right at that height, there wasn't anything for my eyes to see but sweat and hayseed anyway.

A good three-tined fork is a nice lever. You pin a mound of hay so it will bind on itself, step back, and heave mostly with your belly muscles, and as it comes up over your shoulder the swing of it starts you half around toward the load, and all you do for a few seconds is balance as you move in and get it higher, hand over hand, and try to see where to put it.

'Where'll you have it, Grompa?'

'Put it here where I've got my fork.'

'Can't see you *nor* fork, man. Speak up!'

'Ah then, to your right a piece, lad. Up, now.'

Then, if you're lucky, and the pitch doesn't break and come down around you like a bag of bran, you give it the last inch and feel the loader's fork bite and lift in it, and you let the curved

tines out easy, slipping down, and turn to go for another or push on for the first catch at the next windrow. I was going back for another, I remember, and had got it fair and already up when I heard the wheels creak as the wagon started ahead, and knew I'd have to chase another ten yards with it for nothing — no use letting it down now when the main work was done. I was so mad when I got up with the load over that damn bumpy meadow ground that I gave it the last shove enough to put it through his arm.

Nothing caught it. It was resting against the top of the load a good six feet over my head, and a little wrong balance could send it all to hell.

'Catch it, then, can't you, you —' I hollered up through the rain of wisps and seed and what not. But one of those nasty little claps of wind caught it and it was all over me and the meadow.

The way I saw him, for I was so winded and mad and my eyes were that full of hayseed, was looking around for a clump or nub of something to heave up at him. He wasn't up at all. He was forty feet behind, flat and peaceful on his back in the stubble.

I saw it even before I started running: the old mare had started up for home on her own while he was off balance tromping down one of the back corners; and he was out on his back where he'd landed from that high load, and an old man. I didn't know what to do anyway. I hoped he wasn't bleeding.

I got there and the Old Gentleman was looking up with his bright blue eyes, straight up where the sky was like a coalbin. He still wasn't moving.

'Laddie,' he said, 'yon's a thunderstorm and the hay's out. Won't we be up?'

'How are you, Grompa — all right? You feel all right?' He still had the pitchfork in his hand, and I took it, not knowing what else to do.

'Rain, it will. . . . What's that ye're doing?' he said suddenly, and sat up.

'You can get up all right, Grompa? You sure it's all right?'

It would have been a nice group for 'Youth and Age on the Soil: A Photographic Study.' He was half sitting up with his weight on one arm; I was squatting over him as though he was a pot on the fire, and holding his pitchfork in a foolish way. I knew where we were but didn't know what to do; he didn't know whether it was Christmas or Canada, but he knew what had to be done.

'Come on, man alive, it's coming up to get that good hay wet. What are ye fussing here?' he said, and got up on his feet, reaching for the fork. 'Poking fun at an old man,' he said, and turned on his heel.

By the time I caught up with his long stride he was up to the wagon, and had his foot on the shafts. The only thing I knew to do was not stop him, just stay right in back to keep him steady. He got up on the mare's rump and got hold of the high stake where the reins are tied, and went up on the load.

Then, with as much heave and holler as possible, I sent up three small forkfuls, cramped the wagon over to the last windrow before the gate, and sent him up a few more so fast he wouldn't have time to look around, hollering for him to bind the load in the middle with them, that that was all there was.

It worked, and a mercy it did, because he was a stubborn farming man and we were a mile from the house or anywhere, and I couldn't carry him. We came up the drive as the big drops began to pat down. He was down off the load like ginger as soon as it stopped in the barn, and out to see how much we had scraped off to his personal glory.

I was able to tip off Mother, who knew what to do right away. She called to him from the door that supper was ready. I said to go ahead — I'd unhitch and we'd pitch off in the morning; and sure enough, when I came in for a

look a little later, there he was sitting alone at the table at five in the afternoon, eating meat and potatoes and coffee, sitting up like a ramrod and whacking away with knife and fork and as pretty an eye for stabbing a piece of bread off the plate as you could see.

There was not a thing wrong with him, except my mother was his dead wife and I was Rob, his eldest son. He cleaned off his plate with a brave final clatter, and never so much as looked at his old cabbagehead silver watch. He stretched, put his plates to clean in a tumbler of water, and started for his bedroom, saying with kindness but finality, 'Time for bed now, Sairey.'

I had just started milking my way down the line when my mother came out to say he was sleeping like a baby with his old flannel nightgown on all proper, his clothes hung up neatly, and his Sunday shoes on his feet. We didn't know what to do, and figured neither would the old horse doctor in the village.

I was about half through when Mother came out again, and this time she didn't know whether to laugh or cry. All she could do was beckon me to come into the house. Supper had been cleared away and the kids were playing out in front on the lawn, and the only one in the kitchen when I got there was the Old Gentleman, sitting at the table. His hair was combed smartly back, he had his trousers on over his nightgown, but he didn't have the Sunday shoes on this time, or his wearing shoes — or, in fact, any shoes at all. And he was eating.

'Come on, Len,' he said. 'You're late for your supper. Ah, a grand supper too. Fine.' Len was the name of his daughter's husband, and he was eating a peanut-butter sandwich and had a cup of viciously hot tea. Mother covered up for me as I went out to finish the cows, and soon came out to report that he was asleep again. He had been in fine shape and sung most of three psalms before hanging his trousers

neatly over the closet door and putting his Sunday shoes in the chamber pot.

By the time I had seen to the barn for the night it was late and the kids were in bed, and I went in for my supper, which had been kept warm with special care as for a hero. I had not only become the man of the house, but I had not set the barn on fire or killed a horse. I was too sleepy to strut. So long as Grompa Samyel slept easy and didn't bleed, I could take care of the farm in the morning, and no one the worse.

Mother and I were talking about it in the kitchen. The rain had gone off, and the clean air outside was specially full of a lot of crickets and bugs getting their night work done and batting against the screens. And then suddenly, picking his way through the furniture of the living room, was the Old Gentleman. He came into the light rubbing his eyes, nodding genially. The night-shirt was outside the trousers this time, but he had a tie on.

'Must have dozed off, Sairey,' he said to my mother, pulling a chair up across from me and sitting down. 'Seemed to me like supper time would never come.'

Mother got him a plate and cup, and then hustled into the pantry.

'Well, Fron,' he said to me, 'it's good to have that piece of hay under the barn roof.' Then, rubbing the plate with the palm of his hand lovingly, 'What's for supper?'

My mother came in with some bread and peanut butter in time to help me with that one. 'Why, it's meat loaf, Father,' she told him smoothly, 'with potatoes and gravy.' She got a pan of water boiling, dumped some tea into it, and rushed it to him. There was one thing you could never fool him on, and this was that if the water had stopped boiling, it had chilled off — he could drink anything from soup to coffee the instant the bubbles stopped roiling around, and claimed he didn't have to wait for that except it 'hurt his gums

a wee.' He would sit there with his moustache curling in the heat and drink with a relish that sounded like a fast car going through a sheet of water.

'Ah, that's fine,' he said when Mother put the tea down, protecting her hand with a dish towel. 'That's grand.' But as I picked up my own fork he rapped sharply on the table, nodded his head at me once in rebuke, and then bent it. He said straight out over the crickets and peep frogs, in a clear resonant voice: 'Merciful Jesus, in thy gracious bounty . . .'

He finished the grace, ate his bread and peanut butter with praise, leaned back smacking his lips, said with finality that it was time for bed, and went there. The plates stayed in the tumbler where they'd been, for he preferred to eat with his gooms when he could.

Mother looked at me and I looked at Mother, and I guess it was the first time that evening it had really struck us funny. Here he was, putting food into him a meal an hour, and where did it have to go?

I went off to bed, but Mother stayed up 'a while.' The while turned out to be somewhere after midnight, by which time the Old Gentleman, in various states of apparel, had eaten five suppers in all, each long awaited and 'grand,' each blessed in the name of the Lord.

I got up right on time the next morning, but even as I passed through the part-way open door of the cowshed I heard the old steady *throom, throom, throom*, and there was Grompa Samyel with the same heavy cap on backwards and his head against the cow's flank.

'Hey, laddie,' he said. 'Ye're up in time.'

I went over and picked up my milk pail. I almost asked him if he was feeling all right. Then I got my stool and started in on Daisy, my easiest milker and a really soothing spirit.

'It's cloudy a little,' I said finally.

'But there's cobwebs all over in the grass.'

He went *throom, throom, throom* a while, down the line from me by three cows, and said, 'The weather will turn fine.' He got up with his bucket and put it on the scales, pulling his old iron-bound specs out to read the figure. We kept track of each cow by weight of milk night and morning, writing the numbers on a board near the strainer. He wrote 18 carefully in under his cow's number, strained the milk, and went accurately back to number four down the line. And, watching him in his familiar ways, I suddenly stopped being the man of the house for keeps.

'Grompa Samyel,' I said, 'you think we better pitch off that load right after breakfast, or shake out the windrows down in the south meadow?'

'Man dear,' he said (*throom, throom, throom*), 'man dear, are ye clean daft? Let the load sit till we get that patch down by the north wall, before the heat is on it. And with your father away is no time to be making fun. We got the south meadow in yesterday the afternoon — well you know it.'

The sun was breaking when we went in with the pails. Grompa Samyel knew everybody, got his plates from the tumbler, and ate a grand breakfast of ham and potatoes and fried eggs and corncake and syrup and coffee and a piece of pie.

IV

When my father got a job starting in the fall, we got rid of the farm and never went back to one. My Grompa Samyel never knew he'd taken that toss from the load down in the south meadow, but it remained an important landmark along his road to the promised land. He would say 'yesterday' when he meant two years before; he would propose seriously to start tomorrow first thing what had just been finished in the afternoon; he would start a piece of work and then look at the tool in

his hands and say, musing, 'What — what's this shovel? . . . No, it's a mattock — but what . . .' And then he would come imperious: 'Speak up, man alive, now what's the meaning of this — this . . .'

Even in the simpler things he had to be set right from time to time, though on the specific job he would file every tooth on a crosscut saw, and never leave a cow with a dribble of milk in her bag or swing a scythe against a bump of rock. He had fallen farther than the floor of the meadow, into a time machine of his own. One minute he was across the table from you and the next in another world.

This was helped along considerably by our moving into town for good. There he found nothing for his hands to do but putter in the yard or raise his old hymnbook.

He would walk through the house and stand looking out at the weather through every window. Or he would sit quietly by the kitchen stove listening to the eternal family bicker, which he could follow only at unpredictable intervals, like the moon through clouds. He would identify us, one by one, with the youth of his youth, and be satisfied. Doors to familiar simple rooms began to be a mystery to him and he would go through them endlessly, as to new adventures.

And he began to be, in his eternally aimless motion or immobility, a burden on my mother's nerves. In and out as the rest of us were with school, or work, or skylarking, she was the only true victim of that Treadmill Pilgrim. The sweetest of creatures, she would burst out at him at last, having endured his gentle but dogmatic incongruities all day. These provided us with priceless lore and fun, for, when crossed in his fantasy, he would argue; he would bring up name and date and place to support his fool contention, but doing it very like a man carrying bags of cement over ploughed land at night.

Questioned directly, he would get shrewd all of a sudden, like an infinitely tolerant man wary of pranks.

'Grompa,' we would say, 'now you're telling us your own grandfather Samyel played fife with the Regulars, and you heard him play the tunes. Well, whistle us one of the tunes, if you heard them.'

'Ah, they were grand tunes. You could hear him fiffing as far as Belfast.'

'Yes, but do you remember some of the old tunes, Grompa?'

'That I do!'

'Well, what one, then? Could you sing one now?'

'Tunes?' says the Old Gentleman. 'What's that ye're speaking of tunes?'

'Just give us one, then. You never sing anything but what's in the hymnbook.'

'That's no way to be talking! I'll not hear a word against the hymns. For shame with ye!'

'Come on, Grompa, you remember something about how they did it with the old fife and drum, don't you?'

'Ah, the fife and droom. Ah.'

'Well, what did they do? You're just talking now.'

'Eh?'

'You know well enough, man. Didn't you ever hear "Bonnie Doon"?'

He would think for a while and then go to the window and take a look at his weather to be sure it was still there.

'We'll have a fine drop of rain by the morning,' he would say cheerfully.

'Grand for the crops.'

His old brain could get as wild and rusty as you liked, but he kept a perverse shrewdness. We never really were able to back him down, though we were near it once. One of his tricks was to pull you away to look out at an absolutely blank yard.

'Coom, coom,' he would say. 'Look at they in the pits up there.'

'There's nobody there. And what pits?'

'Why, the flax pits — can ye not see with the eyes in your head?'

'All right, if there's a pit there, you come on out with us and show us where.'

'Ah, it's there well enough,' he'd say, and go back to the window. It came out bit by bit that in the old country they would dig a shallow hole and throw the cut flax into it to brew or ferment or mildew or something, and then beat it out with something. He would describe each move in the operation clear as a bell, pointing out through the window at the blank back yard and getting excited, but keeping the firm tolerance of one teaching the blind.

One time he got so excited he forgot himself and agreed to go out and show us.

'Now where's your pit?' we said, surrounding him in the yard.

'Ah, what are ye fetching and tugging at an old man for? Where's the use?'

'Where's the use your taking us to see pits and they not even there, then?'

'Eh? Man dear, the pit's there, well enough — can't you see?'

We'd got him just about to where the pit should be, but he hung back and then he wouldn't budge.

'There's a chill in the air, lads,' he said, 'and we'd best be in the house there.'

'Oh no, oh no,' we all yelled, having visions of being able to put him off, whenever he tried to pull us away from what we were doing, — as he would at any hour to see the pigs in the little pear tree, — by telling him to find the flax pit first.

But he broke away and sidled off, looking back at the house and then at us, wise and forgiving and shaking his head.

'Ah, ye're making fun,' he said, and went back to look for his supper. He never saw 'they in the pits' again, but we kept hearing of many other wonders, like the cow on the henhouse roof, and she wanting to be fed.

The Old Gentleman had a proper respect for the chamber pot as an article of furniture, and indeed should have been born a few hundred years earlier, when it was the true property of liter-

ary heroes. Along with the old double-ender bed, he brought from his home to us a commode about two feet high with double doors in front, and its sole function was that of keeping the pot out of harm's way during the daytime.

In his later years, when he began living almost completely in the lost land of his youth, he would take the pot out at almost any hour of the day or night and go calling. He still had his old boiler of a silver watch, but time in the present had become a trifling thing and a nuisance. We would get a message at practically any time up to three in the morning, from practically anybody, clear to Webster Square: our Old Gentleman was out to make a call.

He would get, say, over the hill and down Wayne Street, and he would come in saying, 'Ah, Mis' Murdock, it's *good* to see you,' take off his old iron derby hat, and sit down to talk sociably for a minute. Then he would forget who he was and where he'd come from.

People were always kind, making small talk and giving him a cup of tea and distracting his attention while they phoned us, and one of us would come to get him, raging and ashamed.

Every time it was the same: he would be there, lost and trembling, peopling a world with monsters; and then he would see the familiar face and rise to greet us. 'Ah, Fron, it's so *good* ye've come.' Before his delight and relief the hard words stored up would vanish and our anger be abashed. And we would take him home gently, and only laugh about it the next day.

His traveling costume was always the same. He would have on the old pin-striped flannel nightgown, of course. And he would have the old high black shoes on his careful feet. (He could fall off almost anything, but he never set his foot where leather would take a scratch.)

Then he would clap on the derby hat. He would take his walking cane in his right hand, and open the door; then he

would go back to the commode. Then he would go forth from the house on his neighborly mission, with the cane in his right hand and the old chamber pot with the rose-and-leaf design in his left. He was a careful man, a thoughtful traveler.

We were finally able to restrict some of the phone calls from near neighbors, but we never could be sure. For, though he might not know our names or what day it was, yet if we were sitting on the front piazza he went up over the drive the back way, and if we were working out in the back he went down the front steps. He was crazy like a fox.

We locked the door on him after he had gone to bed, and, as he was on the ground floor, we learned to screw down his windows from the outside. He would never break a window. 'Glass too dear.' But we forgot he was a machine-tool maker and could take the house apart with a jackknife. So we had to run screws in over the door-hinge bolts and file the heads off. That held him in, for the lock was screwed on from the outside and he could not endure to break anything that cost money.

He hung on a long time. His other children said it was our fault we didn't put him in a home, and I guess a couple of them came through with enough for half his keep. He never forgot them, and in fact esteemed them more than he did us. He had a favorite daughter who was an old maid until she was forty, and then got married without changing much. She didn't want any part of him, of course, and she was very irritable even for a Ferguson, but she lived across Coe's pond on the hill there, and so once a week he would go over to visit and irritate her. She died in her second childbirth and was laid out for the funeral, all stiff and powdered in that horrible undertaker efficiency, with her red hair looking like a wig; and as we filed by the coffin the Old Gentleman stopped and stroked her brow with that gnarled old hand and said a word to her I couldn't hear. It was the only gesture of love we

had ever seen him make, but I think that there, in that tight room with its stink of too many flowers, he buried his youth, which had been bare enough and unlovely, but all the more bright in memory; and he never could quite find it again.

V

He was an awful trouble, wandering in his mind and in everything else, often too weak to move, but calling up some hidden strength in the middle of the night to toss the furniture around and charge from wall to wall in some private terror. I would go down and let him out into the kitchen. He might be able to pick a lock, but he couldn't turn on an electric lamp for the life of him; and until I opened the door he would be struggling for miles in some dark endless country of horrors, — a swamp usually, full of quicksands, — and the instant of my opening the door was stretched out to an infinity of a lantern coming toward him, who so needed light, by circuitous ways. He thought it would never come near, and when I turned the full light on he would put his hands on my shoulders, joyful and incredulous: 'Ah, man, but it's *good* you've come.'

He had read a limp-leather India-paper Bible nearly to dust, in his time, and in addition he had a slim hymnbook with green boards. Years before, he used to puzzle away at the sermons in the *Christian Herald*. Now the print in his two books was too fine for him to make out. For a while he sang the hymns he could remember, but gradually he couldn't remember any all the way through but the Doxology, which he would start up on occasions when delegated to bless the meat.

He had never used his mind on anything, and had no discipline over it, even for the simplest things. We built a garage on the place, cement floor and all, and through the operation he understood the spirit level, joists, eaves, tongue-and-groove boarding, clapboard and mortise

and casement. But the word 'garage'? It was a trap and peril to his dying day. He would say 'the little house.'

'You mean the henhouse, Grompa?'

'No, man! The—the . . . Up there.'

'Up where, then? What are you talking?'

If he couldn't shift the subject, he would finally have to come out with it: 'Up there—in the gizzard!'

Then, too, he missed the soothing example of animals. We still had a kitten around, but it was a small vexation under his feet. We kept a few hens, guarded over by a ferocious rooster, who would attack directly you came within twenty yards of one of his biddies, head low, wings dragging, and a furious ruff crackling up like a picture of Sir Walter Raleigh. And somehow the family had picked up a crow with a bum wing, a cleft palate, and a satanic curiosity. Though he made rich sport for the rest of us, to whom he became humorously attached, he was just sin for Grompa, always lighting in his fine iron-gray hair and pulling it out in tufts, trying to keep his fool balance—caw, caw, caw.

We finally ate the hens, and Jerry the Crow went cawing bloody murder off into the woods for good when, at the end of a Fourth of July with firecrackers from morning on, someone invited his dauntless inspection of a half-gallon jug of ammonia.

The cat had to be put away, and the only other life around the place was when my youngest brother bought four homing pigeons, kept them a few weeks with a trusting heart, took them out one by one, and each tore off to his home in the next county like a bat out of hell.

So the Old Gentleman had just the windows, and his endless journey through the downstairs rooms, each one with new wonders, round and round. The times when some light came through his increasing fogs were fewer and more painful to him—for then he would see

what a useless perfect bother it must all be.

In the last days he kept to his bed most of the time, a wisp of skin and bone with strange sights in his eyes. Those days were no fun for anybody, and mercifully one morning about four o'clock,—time to be at the milking,—my brother, who carried a paper route, came down and heard noises, and found the Old Gentleman struggling in his own sweat.

But he recognized my brother and his face lighted up, and he called my brother by his right name and said he would have a wink of a nap now just till supper, and lay back. My brother knew better than to wake the house and just stood quietly for a minute.

The Old Gentleman then called twice, in a clear voice, on the Lord Jesus in His Infinite Mercy, and went off to find Him.

It was a relief and sadness to us all. They laid him out properly in his old pepper-and-salt broadcloth and cutaway collar with detachable tie, and planted him quietly. My mother came back from the funeral and went directly to the old commode without saying a word. She took the pot and carried it to the door at the head of the cellar stairs, still without saying a word. At the foot of the stairs was a large wooden box, and in years she had got a very mean eye for bouncing cans, bottles, and what not off the stone wall into that box clear from the stairhead. She weighed the pot in her hand a second and then pitched it. The report was heard in every room of the house, and days later we were finding crockery shards with pink roses on them as far as the fruit room, sixty feet away around a corner. Then Mother cried a little, and then she felt a little better, for Grompa Samyel, the thoughtful traveler, would not have wanted to leave it behind to survive him after all. Then Mother changed from her going-out clothes, and began to cook the supper.

LETTER TO ELIZABETH MAYER

(January 1, 1940)

BY W. H. AUDEN

PART I

UNDER the familiar weight
Of winter, conscience and the State,
In loose formations of good cheer,
Love, language, loneliness and fear,
Towards the habits of next year,
Along the streets the people flow,
Singing or sighing as they go:
Exalté, piano, or in doubt,
All our reflections turn about
A common meditative norm,
Retrenchment, Sacrifice, Reform.

Twelve months ago in Brussels, I
Heard the same wishful thinking sigh
As round me, trembling on their beds,
Or taut with apprehensive dreads,
The sleepless guests of Europe lay
Wishing the centuries away,
And the low mutter of their vows
Went echoing through her haunted house
As on the verge of happening
There crouched the presence of The Thing.
All formulas were tried to still
The scratching on the window-sill,
All bolts of custom made secure
Against the pressure on the door,
But up the staircase of events
Carrying his special instruments,
To every bedside all the same
The dreadful figure swiftly came.

Yet Time can moderate his tone
When talking to a man alone,
And the same sun whose neutral eye
All florid August from the sky
Had watched the earth behave and seen
Strange traffic on her brown and green,
Obedient to some hidden force
A ship abruptly change her course,

A train make an unwonted stop,
A little crowd smash up a shop,
Suspended hatreds crystallize
In visible hostilities,
Vague concentrations shrink to take
The sharp crude patterns generals make,
The very morning that the war
Took action on the Polish floor,
Lit up America and on
A cottage in Long Island shone
Where Buxtehude as we played
One of his *passacaglias* made
Our minds a *civitas* of sound
Where nothing but assent was found,
For art had set in order sense
And feeling and intelligence,
And from its ideal order grew
Our local understanding too.

To set in order — that's the task
Both Eros and Apollo ask;
For Art and Life agree in this
That each intends a synthesis,
That order which must be the end
That all self-loving things intend
Who struggle for their liberty,
Who use, that is, their will to be.
Though order never can be willed
But is the state of the fulfilled,
For will but wills its opposite
And not the whole in which they fit,
The symmetry disorders reach
When both are equal each to each,
Yet in intention all are one,
Intending that their wills be done
Within a peace where all desires
Find each in each what each requires,
A true *Gestalt* where indiscrete
Perceptions and extensions meet.
Art in intention is mimesis
But, realized, the resemblance ceases;

Art is not life, and cannot be
 A midwife to society.
 For art is a *fait accompli*.
 What they should do, or how or when
 Life-order comes to living men
 It cannot say, for it presents
 Already lived experience
 Through a convention that creates
 Autonomous completed states.
 Though their particulars are those
 That each particular artist knows,
 Unique events that once took place
 Within a unique time and space,
 In the new field they occupy,
 The unique serves to typify,
 Becomes, though still particular,
 An algebraic formula,
 An abstract model of events
 Derived from dead experiments,
 And each life must itself decide
 To what and how it be applied.

Great masters who have shown mankind
 An order it has yet to find,
 What if all pedants say of you
 As personalities be true?
 All the more honor to you then
 If, weaker than some other men,
 You had the courage that survives
 Soiled, shabby, egotistic lives,
 If poverty or ugliness,
 Ill-health or social unsuccess
 Hunted you out of life to play
 At living in another way;
 Yet the live quarry all the same
 Were changed to huntsmen in the game,
 And the wild furies of the past,
 Tracked to their origins at last,
 Trapped in a medium's artifice,
 To charity, delight, increase.
 Now large, magnificent, and calm,
 Your changeless presences disarm
 The sullen generations, still
 The fright and fidget of the will,
 And to the growing and the weak
 Your final transformations speak,
 Saying to dreaming 'I am deed.'
 To striving 'Courage, I succeed.'
 To mourning 'I remain. Forgive.'
 And to becoming 'I am. Live.'

They challenge, warn and witness. Who
 That ever has the rashness to
 Believe that he is one of those
 The greatest of vocations chose,

Is not perpetually afraid
 That he's unworthy of his trade,
 As round his tiny homestead spread
 The grand constructions of the dead,
 Nor conscious, as he works, of their
 Complete uncompromising stare,
 And the surveillance of a board
 Whose warrant cannot be ignored?
 O often, often must he face,
 Whether the critics blame or praise,
 Young, high-brow, popular or rich,
 That summary tribunal which
 In a perpetual session sits,
 And answer, if he can, to its
 Intense interrogation. Though
 Considerate and mild and low
 The voices of the questioners,
 Although they delegate to us
 Both prosecution and defence,
 Accept our rules of evidence
 And pass no sentence but our own,
 Yet, as he faces them alone,
 O who can show convincing proof
 That he is worthy of their love?
 Who ever rose to read aloud
 Before that quiet attentive crowd
 And did not falter as he read,
 Stammer, sit down, and hang his head?
 Each one, so liberal is the law,
 May choose whom he appears before,
 Pick any influential ghost
 From those whom he admires the most.
 So, when my name is called, I face,
 Presiding coldly on my case,
 That lean hard-bitten pioneer
 Who spoiled a temporal career
 And to the supernatural brought
 His passion, senses, will and thought,
 By Amor Rationalis led
 Through the three kingdoms of the dead,
 In concrete detail saw the whole
 Environment that keeps the soul,
 And grasped in its complexity
 The Catholic ecology,
 Described the savage fauna he
 In Malebolge's fissure found,
 And fringe of blessed flora round
 A juster nucleus than Rome,
 When love had its creative home.
 Upon his right appears, as I
 Reluctantly must testify
 And weigh the sentence to be passed,
 A choleric enthusiast,
 Self-educated WILLIAM BLAKE,
 Who threw his spectre in the lake,

Broke off relations in a curse
 With the Newtonian Universe,
 But even as a child would pet
 The tigers Voltaire never met,
 Took walks with them through Lambeth, and
 Spoke to Isaiah in the Strand,
 And heard inside each mortal thing
 Its holy emanation sing.
 While to his left upon the bench,
 Muttering that terror is not French,
 Frowns the young RIMBAUD guilt demands,
 The adolescent with red hands,
 Skillful, intolerant and quick,
 Who strangled an old rhetoric.
 The court is full; I catch the eyes
 Of several I recognize,
 For as I look up from the dock
 Embarrassed glances interlock.
 There DRYDEN sits with modest smile,
 The master of the middle style,
 Conscious CATULLUS who made all
 His gutter-language musical,
 Black TENNYSON whose talents were
 For an articulate despair,
 Trim, dualistic BAUDELAIRE,
 Poet of cities, harbors, whores,
 Acedia, gaslight and remorse,
 HARDY whose Dorset gave much joy
 To one unsocial English boy,
 And RILKE whom *Die Dinge* bless,
 The Santa Claus of loneliness.
 And many others, many times,
 For I relapse into my crimes,
 Time and again have slubbered through
 With slip and slapdash what I do,
 Adopted what I would disown,
 The preacher's loose immodest tone;
 Though warned by a great sonneteer
 Not to sell cheap what is most dear,
 Though horrible old Kipling cried
 'One instant's toil to Thee denied
 Stands all eternity's offence,'
 I would not give them audience.
 Yet still the weak offender must
 Beg still for leniency and trust
 His power to avoid the sin
 Peculiar to his discipline.

The situation of our time
 Surrounds us like a baffling crime.
 There lies the body half-dressed,
 We all had reason to detest,
 And all are suspects and involved
 Until the mystery is solved
 And under lock and key the cause
 That makes a nonsense of our laws.

O Who is trying to shield Whom?
 Who left a hairpin in the room?
 Who was the distant figure seen
 Behaving oddly on the green?
 Why did the watchdog never bark?
 Why did the footsteps leave no mark?
 Where were the servants at that hour?
 How did a snake get in the tower?
 Delayed in the democracies
 By departmental vanities,
 The rival sergeants run about
 But more to squabble than find out,
 Yet where the Force has been cut down
 To one inspector dressed in brown,
 He makes the murderer whom he pleases
 And all investigation ceases.
 Yet our equipment all the time
 Extends the area of the crime
 Until the guilt is everywhere,
 And more and more we are aware,
 However miserable may be
 Our parish of immediacy,
 How small it is, how, far beyond,
 Ubiquitous within the bond
 Of one impoverishing sky,
 Vast spiritual disorders lie.
 Who, thinking of the last ten years,
 Does not hear howling in his ears
 The Asiatic cry of pain,
 The shots of executing Spain,
 See stumbling through his outraged mind
 The Abyssinian, blistered, blind,
 The dazed uncomprehending stare
 Of the Danubian despair,
 The Jew wrecked in the German cell,
 Flat Poland frozen into hell,
 The silent dumps of unemployed
 Whose *aretè* has been destroyed,
 And will not feel blind anger draw
 His thoughts towards the Minotaur,
 To take an early boat for Crete
 And rolling, silly, at its feet
 Add his small tidbit to the rest?
 It lures us all; even the best,
Les hommes de bonne volonté, feel
 Their politics perhaps unreal
 And all they have believed untrue,
 Are tempted to surrender to
 The grand apocalyptic dream
 In which the persecutors scream
 As on the evil Aryan lives
 Descends the night of the long knives;
 The bleeding tyrant dragged through all
 The ashes of his capitol.
 Though language may be useless, for
 No words men write can stop the war

Or measure up to the relief
 Of its immeasurable grief,
 Yet truth, like love and sleep, resents
 Approaches that are too intense,
 And often when the searcher stood
 Before the Oracle, it would
 Ignore his grown-up earnestness
 But not the child of his distress,
 For through the Janus of a joke
 The candid psychopompos spoke.

May such heart and intelligence
 As huddle now in conference
 Whenever an impasse occurs
 Use the Good Offices of verse;
 May an Accord be reached, and may
 This *aide-mémoire* on what they say,
 This private minute for a friend,
 Be the dispatch that I intend;
 Although addressed to a Whitehall
 Be under Flying Seal to all
 Who wish to read it anywhere,
 And, if they open it, *En Clair*.

PART II

Tonight a scrambling decade ends
 And strangers, enemies and friends
 Stand once more puzzled underneath
 The signpost on the barren heath
 Where the rough mountain track divides
 To silent valleys on all sides,
 Endeavoring to decipher what
 Is written on it but cannot,
 Nor guess in what direction lies
 The overhanging precipice.
 Through the pitch-darkness can be heard
 Occasionally a muttered word,
 And intense in the mountain frost
 The heavy breathing of the lost;
 Far down below them whence they came
 Still flickers feebly a red flame,
 A tiny glow in the great void
 Where an existence was destroyed;
 And now and then a nature turns
 To look where her whole system burns
 And with a last defiant groan
 Shudders her future into stone.

How hard it is to set aside
 Terror, concupiscence and pride,
 Learn who and where and how we are,
 The children of a modest star,
 Frail, backward, clinging to the granite
 Skirts of a sensible old planet,

Our placid and suburban nurse
 In Sitter's swelling universe,
 How hard to stretch imagination
 To live according to our station.
 For we are all insulted by
 The mere suggestion that we die
 Each moment and that each great I
 Is but a process in a process
 Within a field that never closes;
 As proper people find it strange
 That we are changed by what we change,
 That no event can happen twice
 And that no two existences
 Can ever be alike; we'd rather
 Be perfect copies of our father,
 Prefer our *idées fixes* to be
 True of a fixed Reality.
 No wonder, then, we lose our nerve
 And blubber when we should observe
 The patriots of an old idea
 No longer sovereign this year,
 Get angry like LABELLIÈRE,
 Who, finding no invectives hurled
 Against a topsy-turvy world
 Would right it, earned a quaint renown
 By being buried upside-down;
 Unwilling to adjust belief,
 Go mad in a fantastic grief
 Where no adjustment need be done,
 Like SARAH WHITEHEAD, the Bank Nun,
 For, loving a live brother, she
 Wed an impossibility,
 Pacing Threadneedle Street in tears,
 She watched one door for twenty years
 Expecting what she dared not doubt,
 Her hanged embezzler to walk out.

But who, though, is the Prince of Lies
 If not the Spirit-that-denies,
 The shadow just behind the shoulder
 Claiming it's wicked to grow older
 Though we are lost if we turn round
 Thinking salvation has been found?
 Yet in his very effort to
 Prevent the actions we could do,
 He has to make the here and now
 As marvelous as he knows how
 And so engrossing we forget
 To drop attention for regret;
 Defending relaxation, he
 Must show impassioned energy,
 And all through tempting us to doubt
 Point us the way to find truth out.
 Poor cheated MEPHISTOPHELES,
 Who think you're doing as you please

In telling us by doing ill
 To prove that we possess free will,
 Yet do not will the will you do,
 For the Determined uses you,
 Creation's errand-boy creator,
Diabolus egrediatur
Ante pedes ejus — foe,
 But so much more effective, though,
 Than our well-meaning stupid friends
 In driving us towards good ends.
 Lame fallen shadow, *retro* me,
Retro but do not go away:
 Although, for all your fond insistence,
 You have no positive existence,
 Are only a recurrent state
 Of fear and faithlessness and hate,
 That takes on from becoming me
 A legal personality,
 Assuming your existence is
 A rule-of-thumb hypostasis,
 For, though no person, you can damn,
 So, *credo ut intelligam*.
 For how could we get on without you
 Who give the *savoir-faire* to doubt you
 And keep you in your proper place,
 Which is, to push us into grace?

Against his paralyzing smile
 And honest realistic style
 Our best protection is that we
 In fact live in eternity.
 The sleepless counter of our breaths
 That chronicles the births and deaths
 Of pious hopes, the short careers
 Of dashing promising ideas,
 Each congress of the Greater Fears,
 The emigration of beliefs,
 The voyages of hopes and griefs,
 Has no direct experience
 Of discontinuous events,
 And all our intuitions mock
 The formal logic of the clock.
 All real perception, it would seem,
 Has shifting contours like a dream,
 Nor have our feelings ever known
 Any discretion but their own.
 Suppose we love, not friends or wives,
 But certain patterns in our lives,
 Effects that take the cause's name,
 Love cannot part them all the same;
 If in this letter that I send
 I write 'Elizabeth's my friend,'
 I cannot but express my faith
 That I is Not-Elizabeth.
 For though the intellect in each
 Can only think in terms of speech

We cannot practise what we preach.
 The cogitations of Descartes
 Are where all sound semantics start;
 In Ireland the great Berkeley rose
 To add new glories to our prose,
 But when in the pursuit of knowledge,
 Risking the future of his college,
 The bishop hid his anxious face,
 'Twas more by grammar than by grace
 His modest Church-of-England God
 Sustained the fellows and the quad.
 But the Accuser would not be
 In his position, did not he,
 Unlike the big-shots of the day,
 Listen to what his victims say.
 Observing every man's desire
 To warm his bottom by the fire
 And state his views on Education,
 Art, Women, and The Situation,
 Has learnt what every woman knows,
 The wallflower can become the rose,
 Penelope the homely seem
 The Helen of Odysseus' dream
 If she will look as if she were
 A fascinated listener,
 Since men will pay large sums to whores
 For telling them they are not bores.
 So when with overemphasis
 We contradict a lie of his,
 The great Denier won't deny
 But purrs: 'You're cleverer than I;
 Of course you're absolutely right,
 I never saw it in that light.
 I see it now: The intellect
 That parts the Cause from the Effect
 And thinks in terms of Space and Time
 Commits a legalistic crime,
 For such an unreal severance
 Must falsify experience.
 Could one not almost say that the
 Cold serpent on the poisonous tree
 Was *l'esprit de géométrie*,
 That Eve and Adam till the Fall
 Were totally illogical,
 But as they tasted of the fruit
 The syllogistic sin took root?
 Abstracted, bitter refugees,
 They fought over their premises,
 Shut out from Eden by the bar
 And Chinese Wall of Barbara.
 O foolishness of man to seek
 Salvation in an *ordre logique*!
 O cruel intellect that chills
 His natural warmth until it kills
 The roots of all togetherness!
 Love's vigor shrinks to less and less,

On sterile acres governed by
 Wage's abstract prudent tie
 The hard self-conscious particles
 Collide, divide like numerals
 In knock-down drag-out *laissez-faire*,
 And build no order anywhere.
 O when will men show common sense
 And throw away intelligence,
 That killjoy which discriminates,
 Recover what appreciates,
 The deep unsnobbish instinct which
 Alone can make relation rich,
 Upon the *Beischlaf* of the blood
 Establish a real neighborhood
 Where art and industry and *mœurs*
 Are governed by an *ordre du cœur?*'

The Devil, as is not surprising —
 His business is self-advertising —
 Is a first-rate psychologist
 Who keeps a conscientious list,
 To help him in his ticklish deals,
 Of what each client thinks and feels,
 His school, religion, birth and breeding,
 Where he has dined and what he's reading,
 By every name he makes a note
 Of what quotations to misquote,
 And flings at every author's head
 Something a favorite author said.
 'The Arts? Well, Flaubert didn't say
 Of artists: "*Ils sont dans le vrai.*"
 Democracy? Ask Baudelaire:
 "*Un esprit Belge,*" a soiled affair
 Of gas and steam and table-turning.
 Truth? Aristotle was discerning:
 "In crowds I am a friend of myth."
 Then, as I start protesting, with
 The air of one who understands
 He puts a Rilke in my hands.
 'You know the *Elegies*, I'm sure —
O Seligkeit der Kreatur
Die immer bleibt in Schoosse — womb,
 In English, is a rhyme to tomb.'
 He moves on tiptoe round the room,
 Turns on the radio to mark
 Isolde's *Sehnsucht* for the dark.
 But all his tactics are dictated
 By problems he himself created,
 For as the great schismatic who
 First split creation into two
 He did what it could never do,
 Inspired it with the wish to be
 Diversity in unity,
 An action which has put him in,
 Pledged as he is to Rule-by-Sin,

As ambiguous a position
 As any Irish politician,
 For, torn between conflicting needs,
 He's doomed to fail if he succeeds,
 And his neurotic longing mocks
 Him with its self-made paradox
 To be both god and dualist.
 For, if dualities exist,
 What happens to the god? If there
 Are any cultures anywhere
 With other values than his own,
 How can it possibly be shown
 That his are not subjective or
 That all life is a state of war?
 While, if the monist view be right,
 How is it possible to fight?
 If love has been annihilated
 There's only hate left to be hated.
 To say two different things at once,
 To wage offensives on two fronts,
 And yet to show complete conviction.
 Requires the purpler kinds of diction,
 And none appreciate as he
 Polysyllabic oratory.
 All vague idealistic art
 That coddles the uneasy heart
 Is up his alley, and his pigeon
 The woozier species of religion,
 Even a novel, play or song,
 If loud, lugubrious and long;
 He knows the bored will not unmask him
 But that he's lost if someone ask him
 To come the hell in off the links
 And say exactly what he thinks.
 To win support of any kind
 He has to hold before the mind
 Amorphous shadows it can hate,
 Yet constantly postpone the date
 Of what he's made The Grand Attraction,
 Putting an end to them by action
 Because he knows, were he to win,
 Man could do evil but not sin.
 To sin is to act consciously
 Against what seems necessity,
 A possibility cut out
 In any world that excludes doubt.
 So victory could do no more
 Than make us what we were before,
 Beasts with a Rousseauistic charm
 Unconscious we were doing harm.
 Politically, then, he's right
 To keep us shivering all night,
 Watching for dawn from Pisgah's height,
 And to sound earnest as he paints
 The new Geneva of the saints,

To strike the poses as he speaks
 Of David's too too Empire Greeks,
 Look forward with the cheesecake air
 Of one who crossed the Delaware.
 A realist, he has always said:
 'It is Utopian to be dead,
 For only on the Other Side
 Are Absolutes all satisfied
 Where at the bottom of the graves
 Low Probability behaves.'

The False Association is
 A favorite strategy of his:
 Induce men to associate
 Truth with a lie, then demonstrate
 The lie and they will, in truth's name,
 Treat babe and bath-water the same,
 A trick that serves him in good stead
 At all times. It was thus he led
 The early Christians to believe
 All Flesh unconscious on the eve
 Of the World's temporal interference
 With the old Adam of Appearance.
 That almost any moment they
 Would see the trembling consuls pray,
 Knowing that as their hope grew less
 So would their heavenly worldliness,
 Their early agapè decline
 To a late lunch with Constantine.
 Thus Wordsworth fell into temptation
 In France during a long vacation,
 Saw in the fall of the Bastille
 The Parousia of liberty,
 And weaving a platonic dream
 Round a provisional régime
 That sloganized the Rights of Man,
 A liberal fellow-traveler ran
 With Sans-culotte and Jacobin,
 Nor guessed what circles he was in,
 But ended as the Devil knew
 An earnest Englishman would do,
 Left by Napoleon in the lurch,
 Supporting the Established Church,
 The Congress of Vienna and
 The Squire's paternalistic hand.

Like his, our lives have been coeval
 With a political upheaval,
 Like him, we had the luck to see
 A rare discontinuity,
 Old Russia suddenly mutate
 Into a proletarian state,
 The odd phenomenon, the strange
 Event of qualitative change.
 Some dreamed, as students always can,
 It realized the potential Man,

A higher species brought to birth
 Upon a sixth part of the earth,
 While others settled down to read
 The theory that forecast the deed
 And found their humanistic view
 In question from the German who,
 Obscure in gaslit London, brought
 To human consciousness a thought
 It thought unthinkable, and made
 Another consciousness afraid.
 What if his hate distorted? Much
 Was hateful that he had to touch.
 What if he erred? He flashed a light
 On facts where no one had been right.
 The father-shadow that he hated
 Weighed like an Alp; his love, frustrated,
 Negating as it was negated,
 Burst out in boils; his animus
 Outlawed him from himself; but thus,
 And only thus, perhaps, could he
 Have come to his discovery.
 Heroic charity is rare;
 Without it, what except despair
 Can shape the hero who will dare
 The desperate catabasis
 Into the snarl of the abyss
 That always lies just underneath
 Our jolly picnic on the heath
 Of the agreeable, where we bask,
 Agreed on what we will not ask,
 Bland, sunny and adjusted by
 The light of the accepted lie?
 As he explored the muttering tomb
 Of a museum reading room,
 The Dagon of the General Will
 Fell in convulsions and lay still;
 The tempting Contract of the rich,
 Revealed as an abnormal witch,
 Fled with a shriek, for as he spoke
 The justifying magic broke;
 The garden of the Three Estates
 Turned desert, and the Ivory Gates
 Of Pure Idea to gates of horn
 Through which the Governments are born.
 But his analysis reveals
 The other side to Him-who-steals
 Is He-who-makes-what-is-of-use,
 Since, to consume, man must produce;
 By Man the Tough Devourer sets
 The nature his despair forgets
 Of Man Prolific since his birth,
 A race creative on the earth,
 Whose love of money only shows
 That in his heart of hearts he knows
 His love is not determined by
 A personal or tribal tie

Or color, neighborhood, or creed,
 But universal, mutual need;
 Loosed from its shroud of temper, his
 Determinism comes to this:
 None shall receive unless they give;
 All must coöperate to live.
 Now he is one with all of those
 Who brought an epoch to a close,
 With him who ended as he went
 Past an archbishop's monument
 The slaveowners' mechanics, one
 With the ascetic farmer's son
 Who, while the Great Plague ran its course,
 Drew up a Roman code of Force,
 One with the naturalist, who fought
 Pituitary headaches, brought
 Man's pride to heel at last and showed
 His kinship with the worm and toad,
 And Order as one consequence
 Of the unfettered play of Chance.

Great sedentary Cæsars who
 Have pacified some dread tabu,
 Whose wits were able to withdraw
 The numen from some local law
 And with a single concept brought
 Some ancient rubbish heap of thought
 To rational diversity,
 You are betrayed unless we see
 No *codex gentium* we make
 Is difficult for Truth to break;
 The *Lex Abscondita* evades
 The vigilantes in the glades;
 Now here, now there, one leaps and cries
 'I've got her and I claim the prize,'
 But when the rest catch up, he stands
 With just a torn blouse in his hands.

We hoped; we waited for the day
 The State would wither clean away,
 Expecting the Millennium
 That theory promised us would come.
 It didn't. Specialists must try
 To detail all the reasons why;
 Meanwhile at least the layman knows
 That none are lost so soon as those
 Who overlook their crooked nose,
 That they grow small who imitate
 The mannerisms of the great,
 Afraid to be themselves, or ask
 What acts are proper to their task,
 And that a tiny trace of fear
 Is lethal in man's atmosphere.

The rays of Logos take effect,
 But not as theory would expect,
 For, sterile and diseased by doubt,
 The dwarf mutations are thrown out
 From Eros' weaving centrosome.

O Freedom still is far from home,
 For Moscow is as far as Rome
 Or Paris. Once again we wake
 With swimming heads and hands that shake
 And stomachs that keep nothing down.
 Here's where the devil goes to town
 Who knows that nothing suits his book
 So well as the hang-over look,
 That few drunks feel more awful than
 The Simon-pure Utopian.
 He calls at breakfast in the rôle
 Of blunt but sympathetic soul:
 'Well, how's our Socialist this morning?
 I could say "Let this be a warning,"
 But no, why should I? Students must
 Sow their wild oats at times or bust.
 Such things have happened in the lives
 Of all the best Conservatives.
 I'll fix you something for your liver.'
 And thus he sells us down the river.
 Repenting of our last infraction
 We seek atonement in reaction
 And cry, nostalgic like a whore,
 'I was a virgin still at four.'
 Perceiving that by sailing near
 The Hegelian whirlpool of Idea
 Some foolish aliens have gone down,
 Lest our democracy should drown
 We'd wreck her on the solid rock
 Of genteel anarchists like Locke,
 Wave at the mechanized barbarian
 The vorpal sword of an Agrarian.
 O how the devil who controls
 The moral asymmetric souls,
 The either-ors, the mongrel halves
 Who find truth in a mirror, laughs.
 Yet time and memory are still
 Limiting factors on his will;
 He cannot always fool us thrice,
 For he may never tell us lies,
 Just half-truths we can synthesize.
 So, hidden in his hocus-pocus,
 There lies the gift of double focus,
 That magic lamp which looks so dull
 And utterly impractical,
 Yet, if Aladdin use it right,
 Can be a sesame to light.

(To be concluded)

WANTED: MORE MILK

BY ROBERT A. WILKINSON

FIVE million American farmers rise from their beds these frosty mornings to milk some 25 million cows. Milk-truck drivers stop at the farms, load the milk, and speed off to railroad stations or city markets. The milk itself is transformed by some 80,000 men into dairy products, or is pasteurized and put in bottles, or fibre or paper containers, for delivery by an army of about 170,000 men to millions of doorsteps and some 400,000 retail stores.

Within a few short decades the dairy industry has grown to girthhood. Milk, one of the most complete of foods, never before has been produced and distributed under such favorable sanitary conditions, and it is estimated that some two million people live today because the milk which they drank as children was made safe. But a costly milk distribution system has been created, so that the housewife now pays about two and a half times more for it than the farmer gets.

The milk distributors are accused of gouging the public and the dairymen, but they claim that they make only small profits. After paying about 5 cents a quart for milk at the farms, it reputedly costs them about 2 cents to haul it to pasteurization plants and to pasteurize it, another 3 cents to get laborers to deliver it to the doorsteps, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents more for the maintenance and depreciation of delivery equipment. This makes milk cost $12\frac{1}{2}$ cents a quart retail, on an average, with an allegedly small distributors' profit included.

Yet this high retail price has an ap-

palling effect on our national well-being. While food authorities insist that each child should have fully a quart of milk a day, each adult a pint, we Americans consume less than two thirds of that quantity. Low-income families consume less than a fourth of a quart per individual per day, according to a 59-city survey reported by the Consumers Council, Agricultural Adjustment Administration, in 1936; and the daily consumption, in families boasting ten children, falls to less than a tenth of a quart. This suggests that it will take something more than a reduction of milk prices to solve the dietary problems of large families. And the conclusion is unavoidable that the general underconsumption of milk contributes to the prevalence of bad teeth and bad eyes, of rickets and pellagra, and to a lack of robust health on the part of millions.

On the other hand, the low consumption of milk depresses the value of this tremendous farm crop and the incomes of the dairy farmers. Their purchasing power is cut. They cannot buy freely the multiple products and services of our industries, with the result that the value of these products and services decreases with the decreasing demand. This has no inconsequential effect on the national economy, since milk alone accounts for about one fifth of the national farm income, despite the current average low price the farmers get for it. The dairy industry, boasting milk and dairy products valued at $3\frac{1}{2}$ billion dollars annually, is larger than either the automotive

or the meat-packing industry, producing respectively 2 billion and $2\frac{1}{2}$ billion dollars' worth of products annually.

Why do Americans consume less than two-thirds enough milk? To answer this question I must tell a story — the story of the mushroom growth of the dairy industry, a story which involves dairymen, politicians, milk distributors, and organized labor.

I

The dairy farmers have long produced a lavish quantity of milk. Today the annual milk production is about 49 billion quarts, enough for a quart a day for each of our population of 130 million, although we actually consume a daily average of only about three to four tenths of a quart in its fluid form. The rest of it, except for the small percentage used in feeding farm livestock, goes into cream and the so-called surplus dairy products — butter, cheese, ice cream, condensed and evaporated milk, malted milk, powdered and dried milk.

Conscious of this ever-heavy crop, the dairymen who farm near city markets, starting about twenty-two years ago, bargained with distributors to get a premium price for all milk sold at retail in its fluid form. 'You pay only one price for milk, whether you retail it in its fluid form or use it in making dairy products,' the dairymen told the distributors; 'yet you get much more for it when you sell it in its fluid form, and most of our milk is sold as fluid milk to city families — so you ought to pay us more.' The distributors capitulated, but made one reservation. 'We'll give you a top price for milk that is retailed in its fluid form,' they said, 'but you'll have to take a much lower price for what is used in making dairy products.' The dairymen agreed, and this is the basis of the so-called classified-price system under which farmers today sell their milk to distributors in most large markets from coast to coast.

How much do farmers get for their

milk under this system? For milk that is retailed in its fluid form, they get an average of about 5 cents per quart. That's the top price. And on the basis of average milk-production costs it's a fairly good price. But only about a third — perhaps slightly more — of the farmers' milk is retailed in its fluid form; only this third commands the top price. About two thirds goes into dairy products, for which the farmers get approximately 2 to 3 cents a quart. This milk is of the same quality as that which brings 5 cents, but the farmers get only 2 to 3 cents — hardly enough to pay the cost of feed for cows in some farm areas.

Such a big price differential for the same quality of milk seems ludicrous, yet there is a justification for it. It takes several quarts of milk to make even a small amount of any dairy product. One pound of butter, for example, contains the butterfat content of about eleven quarts of milk, so that the wholesale cost of butterfat for the one pound, at only 2 cents a quart of milk, is 22 cents. Add manufacturing and distribution costs, and the price jumps to what the buying public is currently paying.

When the classified-price system was first established, the farmers in isolated dairy sections were as pleased as those who farmed near cities. Improved roads were being built, automobiles were becoming common, and they began to haul their milk to the cities, selling it to milk distributors and getting the newly established top price. The dairymen on farms nearer the cities, who had bargained to get the top price, saw more and more of their milk being forced into low-return dairy products, and bitterly condemned the dairymen from distant points for flooding the market and cutting their incomes.

They prevailed upon city health boards, who had long been empowered to prohibit the sale of unsanitary milk, to limit the number of farms they would inspect and license to sell milk in the cities.

Their object, thinly veiled, was to get the health boards to stop the city sale of milk from distant farms. And the health boards of one city after another gradually responded to their wishes. There were arbitrary refusals to license farms at distant points, the excuse being that the inspection work would be too costly or inconvenient. Thus the distant dairymen were denied a right to sell their milk in many cities.

It is obvious that the farmers of our great dairy states, far removed from a wealth of big city markets, are the victims of these arbitrary restrictions. The dairymen of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa produced more than $11\frac{1}{2}$ billion quarts of milk in 1937 — 24 per cent of the total national production — and less than 2 billion quarts were consumed in those states in its fluid form. The great majority of the remaining $9\frac{1}{2}$ billion quarts had to be 'exported' to other states in the form of dairy products. So it is small wonder that, in the same year, the Wisconsin dairymen received an average of 3.4 cents per quart for their milk, the Iowa dairymen 3.1 cents, and the Minnesota dairymen 3.04 cents, while the dairymen in those states with the metropolitan markets got much higher prices. Massachusetts and Connecticut dairymen averaged 7 cents per quart, considerably more than the national average for milk retailed in its fluid form.

After the city health boards arbitrarily refused to inspect and license distant dairy farms, the dairymen agitated for higher and higher prices for their milk. With the coming of the depression their pleas fell on ever more sympathetic ears, and in 1933 dairy-proud Wisconsin empowered its Department of Agriculture and Markets to establish farm and retail milk prices. Since then nearly half the states, chiefly the big dairy states, have established similar price-fixing bodies, and many county and municipal bodies have displayed little hesitation in passing ordinances designed to limit competition in milk distribution and stabilize prices.

Both the municipal health boards, in limiting the supply of city milk, and the state milk boards, in maintaining high milk prices, led dairymen on farms near the cities to produce more and more milk. This prompted the dairy-farm coöperatives, which have gradually grown in number and size during the past twenty-five years, to take drastic action. They dictated the amount of milk which each of their members could produce, on the basis of each one's past production record, and ruled that any surplus would have to be sold for making dairy products. This helped curb the overproduction mania, but naturally those dairymen who were given only small production quotas were denied any opportunity to expand their operations, and their initiative was killed.

The price-fixing bodies, in increasing the price of milk, have adhered to the single-track theory that guaranteeing the dairy farmers a reasonable price for their milk would make the farmers prosper. This sounds reasonable. But it has precluded any unbiased consideration of the public, the consumers of the milk; and the public somehow hasn't bought as much milk when high prices have been maintained in the face of lowered incomes. Unavoidably, the farmers have suffered.

During the severe depression years, the retail price of milk was maintained at a relatively higher level than the price of all other foods, on the basis of 1925-1927 index figures, and the consumption of milk declined substantially. From 1929 to 1934, according to *Agricultural Statistics, 1939*, the per capita consumption of milk and cream fell from 163 quarts to 144 quarts annually, a decrease of nearly 12 per cent. Billions of quarts of milk that formerly entered the fluid market, commanding a top price, had to be sold for much less for making dairy products.

Under the AAA, the Department of Agriculture supports a price-fixing program. Instead of setting both the farm

and the retail price of milk, it establishes only the price to be paid the farmers by the milk distributors, trusting the distributors to absorb some or all of any increase in the price set for the farmers. This is only a beautiful hope. Whenever the farm price is increased, the retail price goes up. When dairymen of the New York milkshed, in August 1939, were granted an AAA-established price increase of .53 cent a quart, the retail price jumped .50 cent. One month later the same dairymen got another AAA-established price increase, .76 cent a quart, and the retail price advanced 1.00 cent; the next month the dairymen got still another increase, .47 cent a quart, and in the same and two succeeding months the retail price advanced a total of .50 cent. While the dairymen got a combined increase in this period of 1.76 cents a quart, the consumers had to pay 2.00 cents more.

Some state price-fixing bodies have gone to the extreme of establishing the same price for retail-store and home-delivered milk. They know that milk can be sold cheaper in stores, because of lower distribution costs, but they have doggedly insisted, in seeking to help the dairy farmers, on maintaining an arbitrarily high one-price system. Even where store prices have not been elevated by law, the same results have been generally attained through the concerted action of dairymen, unionized milk deliverymen, and distributors. The moment any retailer cuts the regulation retail price, he becomes the target of an often violent conflict. Unionized labor boycotts him, tips over the trucks of anyone selling him milk, and, as has been done in Chicago, may even wreck his store.

II

Yet it has been demonstrated dramatically that stores can retail milk at drastically reduced prices. In some cities new and revolutionary retail merchandising methods have been introduced.

In the San Bernardino-Riverside area of California, the Safeway stores have purchased milk from farmers at 5 cents a quart, pasteurized it, and retailed it for 8 cents — a reduction of $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent as compared to 12-cent milk. They would like to reduce retail milk prices in other areas, but are restrained by legally fixed prices and other artificial obstacles. On the other hand, just five years ago George A. Johnson established a pasteurization plant in Detroit, contracted with farmers to purchase their milk, and opened retail 'milk depots' as sales outlets for his milk and dairy products. When milk was selling at 12 cents a quart, he retailed it at 8 cents. Since then he has sold it for from 2 to 6 cents less per quart than his competitors, including the Detroit subsidiaries of the two giant milk distributors, Borden and National Dairy, and he has paid employees and the dairymen more money than his competitors. Not much more, it is true — but more! Yet he could not have done this without arousing the organized opposition of union labor and established distributors if it had not been for the friendly support of the prosecuting attorney of Wayne County, in which Detroit is situated.

In New York City, the Board of Health just recently outlawed the sale of Grade A and B milks, forcing the distributors to market only one grade and thus eliminate high-price Grade A. This action followed a prolonged assault by fiery Mayor Fiorello La Guardia on the sale of Grade A milk, starting last January. The mayor termed Grade A, selling at 3 cents a quart more than Grade B, a 'de luxe money-maker' for the big distributors. 'Buy Grade B milk,' he urged consumers. 'It is just as good; it is just as wholesome; it is just as sanitary as Grade A milk.'

Months before Mayor La Guardia launched his attack, the New York City subsidiaries of Borden and National Dairy took steps to reduce the retail price of all home-delivered milk. To cut

the cost of distribution, they introduced a two-quart fibre milk container, the first change in milk distribution methods within thirty years. The new two-quart unit sells for 28 cents — a reduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents.

A similar plan for reducing house-to-house retail prices is fast gaining favor elsewhere. Distributors in twelve other cities, including Chicago, began selling two-quart and gallon glass jars of milk after the New York plan was launched. The two-quart glass units were first retailed at a saving of $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents a quart; the gallon glass units at a saving of $3\frac{1}{2}$ cents. With the price at about 11 cents for a one-quart bottle in Chicago, four quarts in one glass unit can be bought for about the same price as three quarts in three one-quart bottles.

This is only an encouraging sign of what is to come. The consuming public and the dairymen are still faced with a headstrong situation. In delivering large units of milk at reduced prices to family doorsteps only, the distributors are seeking to discourage the purchase of milk from retail stores. More and more milk has been sold through stores during late years, and the distributors are plainly seeking to rebuild their house-to-house sales volume and thus maintain and safeguard this high-cost delivery system. It enables them to push the sale of their Grade A and Vitamin D milks, from which they make handsome profits, and to maintain direct sales relations with the consuming public, thus minimizing the danger of new and resourceful competition. Chain grocery stores, for instance, are not likely to market and promote the sale of their own brands of milk if all milk continues to be sold chiefly at the doorstep.

If milk can be retailed cheaper in large units at the housewife's doorstep, in the public interest it can be retailed still more cheaply in stores. A reduced price in the stores would stimulate the purchase and consumption of milk by low-income families who now get too little

of it, and would inevitably lead to improved health on the part of millions. The dairy farmers, too, would greatly benefit. For they would be selling more milk at about 5 cents a quart instead of at 2 to 3 cents. Their purchasing power would be greatly enhanced, and this would stimulate business nationally.

III

How much can milk consumption be stimulated? One can only conjecture, but there is reason to believe it can be stimulated substantially. In 1939 the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation, by drastically cutting retail milk prices, increased consumption by 50 per cent on the part of Boston relief families. Those on direct relief were sold milk at 5 cents a quart, the average price paid to farmers for milk retailed in its fluid form, and those on WPA got it at 7 cents.

As a general retail store price, 5 cents per quart is untenable, since it does not allow for any pasteurization or distribution costs, but the Safeway stores in California's San Bernardino-Riverside area and George Johnson in Detroit have almost met the 7 cents per quart price. In fact, Johnson has sold milk for as low as 7 cents a quart.

Borden and National Dairy, in distributing milk at a reduced price in large containers in New York City, apparently are increasing sales substantially. They decline as yet to give sales figures, saying it is too early to estimate the increase that may be attained, but two illuminating facts are known. In Rockland County, New York, where the two-quart unit sales plan was tested before being introduced in New York City, the sale of home-delivered milk increased about 45 per cent; secondly, more than half of all New York City families who have milk delivered at their doorsteps are now buying it in cost-saving two-quart containers.

In energetically promoting their New

York City sales, Borden and National Dairy are also effectively using advertising. For some reason the advertising of milk has been neglected as a means of stimulating total consumption. The milk distributors, to be sure, have done considerable advertising of high-cost Grade A and Vitamin D, but they have ignored the fact that the potential big market for milk is the Grade B market.

Most of the emphasis seems to have been on increasing the sale and consumption of dairy products. Because the price of milk, when not arbitrarily set by price-fixing bodies, is adversely affected by any huge stocks of dairy products, there is a marked tendency within the industry (even on the part of the dairy farmers) to concentrate on increasing the consumption of butter and cheese. The consumption of milk is generally considered last. It is fair to add that the big dairy companies claim they make substantially more on the sale of dairy products than on Grade B milk.

Dairy farmers now are awakening to the vital need for sustained advertising to stimulate the consumption of milk. In some states they are financing milk advertising campaigns, and there is agitation for a national campaign, to be financed by individual assessments on all dairy farmers on the basis of their individual yearly milk production totals.

One of America's leading advertising men, who has studied milk marketing problems, recently wrote:—

Any good non-luxury product, particularly one with a strong health story, ought to respond to advertising in a big way. Everyone knows about milk. Everyone accepts the fact that it is good for babies and nourishing for everyone. Most people like it. But they are so familiar with it, in a general way, that it never occurs to them to drink it daily as a regular part of their diet. Advertising could fix all of that—certainly with a reduction in retail milk prices. In fact, I can't think of an easier advertising job.

Many other means can also be used for stimulating milk consumption. Since

distribution costs can be pared to the core by delivering milk in large quantities, why not make large and airtight sanitary milk refrigeration units, from which consumers could get quarts, half gallon and gallon units, by inserting coins, just as diners get glasses of milk in automat cafeterias? These could be made for installation not only in grocery stores, but in large apartment houses where scores, sometimes hundreds, of families live.

Such a merchandising plan is feasible today. Milk keeps much better now than in by-gone decades. The bacteria count is lower,—most health regulations require this,—and refrigeration facilities have been vastly improved. As pasteurized now, milk has been known to be kept by housewives for about a week; in fact, some mistakenly believe that a preservative must be used in it. Surprisingly, however, it can be kept much longer. For many years the big ocean liners have kept it fresh for from sixteen to eighteen days, at a constant temperature of 36 to 38 degrees Fahrenheit, and William K. Vanderbilt is reported to have kept milk fresh on a yacht cruise for six months. The milk was pasteurized three times, once on each of three successive days, by the Walker-Gordon Laboratory, thus being made completely sterile without impairing its taste or odor, then sealed in airtight paraffin-capped bottles and kept at a temperature of from 33 to 40 degrees Fahrenheit. And cream is now being marketed in cans, with its taste and odor seemingly unimpaired.

There is already some undercurrent agitation within the dairy industry for the establishment of a research fund for biochemists. It would be their job to take milk out of the perishable-products class—to get it to consumers in cans, just as condensed and evaporated milk has long been marketed, but with its fresh odor and taste unimpaired. Milk then would take its place on the grocers' shelves along with vegetables and fruits,

and the whole top-heavy cost of distributing it would vanish overnight. In addition, for those who do not relish the natural taste of milk, the biochemists might produce it in a variety of artificial flavors.

Before biochemists are likely to solve these problems, it is probable that the current artificial barriers against the free competitive sale of milk will be swept aside by the enactment of new and the enforcement of old legislation. A widespread war against restraints on free competitive trade in many fields of endeavor, including those in the dairy industry, is fast gaining momentum. The Council of State Governments is making substantial headway in getting trade-warring states, which have imposed legislative restrictions on the sale of products from other states, to rescind them. The Federal Government's newly formed Interdepartmental Committee on Interstate Trade Barriers is devising ways and means of sweeping aside all obstructions to interstate commerce and making the United States once again 'the greatest free-trade area in the world.'

On another front, Thurman Arnold, the Assistant Attorney General, is using the Sherman Antitrust Act as his scalpel in cutting down artificial prices and restraints of free competitive trade. He has a staff of about two hundred lawyers, as compared to Theodore Roosevelt's trust-busting staff of five; and unionized labor, the building industry, the field of medicine, gasoline distributors and producers, and the dairy industry itself already have felt the sharpness of his attack.

About two years ago Arnold obtained 57 indictments against key figures and organizations in the brutally troublesome Chicago milkshed, charging them with conspiracy to fix prices, to control the milk supply, and to suppress competition; and the price of milk immediately dropped from 12 to 8½ cents a quart in

Chicago stores and from 13 to 11 cents at the doorstep. During the two years of litigation, in which the cases went to the United States Supreme Court and back again, the retail prices jumped when the defendants won a legal decision and dropped when the government won a point. Finally, last September, the defendants signed a consent decree, saying in effect that they would refrain from doing the things charged by the government; and Arnold, who had seen the high retail prices broken without adversely affecting the farmers, had the criminal charges dismissed.

'Milk distribution should become possible,' Arnold has said, 'by the various methods which the consuming public may find desirable, and not, as now, so largely by the costly system of back-door delivery.' Yet this is but half of the objective of Arnold and his associates. The public interest also demands that the dairymen of comparatively isolated areas, such as those of the Midwest dairy empires, should have restored to them their once inalienable right to sell their milk in any markets they see fit.

We now have a wealth of roads and transportation facilities to bring milk from distant points to cities. And we have so greatly reduced the bacteria count of milk that, with the development of vastly improved refrigeration facilities, it can be kept fresh under ideal conditions for a considerable period of time. This presages the day, once the artificial marketing restrictions are removed, when milk from any section of the country can be sold anywhere within the forty-eight states. Unrestricted amounts of milk then will flow into our big city markets. Where there long has been a pronounced underconsumption of one of the most perfect of foods, there will be an abundance at reasonable retail prices. Then the dairymen of Oshkosh, Keokuk, and Mankato will have their day. And so will the consumers.

SIBELIUS AT SEVENTY-FIVE

BY LUCIEN PRICE

I

ON December 8, 1940, Jean Sibelius completed three quarters of a century. A small nation, but one vividly conscious of its racial antiquity, still close to the soil and possessing an authentic traditional epic, yet also advancing with the first rank of modern culture, has produced the symphonic talent which spans from the nineteenth century into the twentieth. It is a nation further solidified by resistance to repeated pressure from Russia, whose latest assault only last winter aroused the indignation of all free peoples.

Helsinki combines the dignity of a capital with the charm of a big town. In the same degree of latitude as the lower end of Greenland, its position suggests that with Sibelius the symphony, in a double sense, has reached its farthest north. What with university, libraries, museums, repertory theatres in Finnish and Swedish, symphony orchestra, conservatory of music, schools of art, a bookstore whose size in Europe is exceeded only by one in Paris, Finnish culture gives one the sense of being in a modern Hellas with Russia as its Persia, Germany as its Egypt, and Britain as its Rome. How close the present there is to the past may be inferred: late one afternoon in August, crossing three fields and a stream which lie between the villa of Dr. Sibelius and the Paloheimo estate, the son-in-law of the composer remarked, 'I know these people; let's step in.' A peasant's family with gracious rustic manners, who addressed Mr. Paloheimo affectionately as

'Squire,' were cooking supper over a fire of twigs on a raised and open hearth which looked queerly familiar. It was. You see its duplicate when the curtain rises on Act I of *Die Walküre*. This is within twenty miles of Helsinki, which has put up some of the very best of modern architecture. It is thus a land where doors still stand open to the legendary past, and a people whose ancestral mythology, the Kalevala, with the Edda and sagas, is just around the corner.

In a book which Sibelius appears to know almost by heart, Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe*, the aged poet says, 'I had the great advantage of being born at a time when momentous events agitated the world.' Seven Years' War, American Independence, French Revolution, Napoleonic era . . . 'thus I have attained results and insights impossible to those who must learn all these from books which they will not understand.' He was speaking in 1824, at the start of a comparatively quiet century: 1814 to 1914. But quiet has been no word for Finland since Sibelius arrived at manhood, nor can he complain of having been born into an epoch devoid of world events.

Son of a regimental doctor who died when the boy was two and a half years old, active and a mighty hunter though bored by boys' games, quick at studies but diligent only when those studies are congenial, he is reared in a musical household, and at fifteen music takes possession of him. His instrument is the violin,

and for the next ten years his consuming ambition is to become a concert virtuoso. Discovering Marx's theory of composition in the school library of Tavastehus at the age of sixteen, he tackles the study by himself, and a year later (1883) is composing chamber music. Middle-class respectability vetoes music as a career and condemns him to a year of law at the university, which would have been drearier if he had not neglected his law for his music. Then a wise uncle effects his release and he espouses music.

The marriage was not at first entirely happy. As ambitious boys will often do, he had cast himself for a part, that of concert violinist, which he was not fitted to play. But somewhere behind the scenes of any notable career is generally a discerning and devoted teacher, and in this one he was Martin Wegelius. Strict classicist and stern drill-master, he did for Sibelius what Theodor Weinlig, the worthy Cantor of the Thomas-schule at Leipzig, did for Wagner — kept him at severe technical exercises until he understood the fundamentals of his craft. Wegelius is one reason why you never hear Sibelius fumble his orchestra.

Another lucky schooling dropped into his lap. Here and there a lad takes to the Greek and Latin authors like a bee to honey, and such a lad was Sibelius. He read them in their originals (as indeed, until of late, who ever suggested that they be seriously read in any other form?) and their intellectual integrity has gone into the forming of his style. Homer fostered his taste for the heroic saga, and Horace for terseness of phrase. In fact, his style is so like that of the ancient classics that until he told me otherwise I had thought they had been consciously his models, but the case seems to be that he took to the classics because he is by nature a classicist, and he did say, 'What I find in them is clearness of form, and depth of feeling without sentimentality.'

Young men who studied music in

Berlin during the '80s and '90s knew alternate leapings and sinkings of the heart. 'Speak not of Rome, for what should I do there . . .' Imperial Germany was feeling its oats, and whoever cares to know how it pranced can still hear it in Strauss's *Don Juan*, composed in 1889, the year Sibelius went to Berlin as a student. Twenty years later *Don Juan* and the Second Symphony of Sibelius turning up on the same program made historic irony: the swagger was all with Strauss, the depth was all with Sibelius.

Freedom of the stacks in a university library best describes the volumes of music Sibelius was able in Berlin to hear for the first time. Albert Becker taught him composition still in strict style, 'until I knew the German psalter backward.' It was not exciting, but the pupil was shrewd enough to know that practice in strict style is 'as important for a composer as the study of anatomy for a sculptor.' At Berlin, too, began his friendship with Robert Kajanus, conductor of the Helsinki orchestra, for only in Germany could they meet, owing to a feud of local musicians in Helsinki. The Finnish epic, *Kalevala*, was not then the national textbook which it later became. Kajanus opened this Finnish Homer to Sibelius. Meanwhile in Berlin the boy from the provinces was making a not uncommon discovery: 'I gained the impression that in many respects the educated classes in Finland were considerably more advanced.'

Vienna went better. It was his second year abroad (1890-1891); Robert Fuchs, a trained orchestrator, was one of his teachers; Goldmark the other. Goldmark's instruction was largely oracular, but Sibelius has always been good at interpreting oracles. Genial and high-hearted himself, the young Finn found the gayety and friendliness of Vienna to his taste, though his wife, when he was saying so, corrected him a point: 'Some of the letters I had from you in Vienna — you have forgotten — were very gloomy.'

In the city where Brahms still lived and worked, a student of orchestration was a corporal dreaming of a Field Marshal's baton.

Naturally he wanted to meet Brahms. It was not easy. The encounter finally came by chance in a café. 'Brahms,' relates Dr. Sibelius forty-two years later, 'was very correct.' (Standing, he lays one forearm at right angles against his heart, the other held stiffly at his side, then bows low and formally. The mimicry is respectful, but it is also comic and contrived to signify that he and Brahms did not get very far personally, though I understood him to say that Father Nordicus was civil about one of his songs that was sent to him.) All the same, the fact that the pair ever met at all shows how closely linked this lineal succession of master composers has been. Field Marshal to Field Marshal, Sibelius meets Brahms; Brahms knew Schumann; Schumann (in 1838), only ten years after Schubert's death, blew the dust off the neglected manuscript of his Ninth Symphony and got it to a publisher; Schubert was at Beethoven's deathbed; and Beethoven studied with Haydn. The sequence of personal encounter has only one break in that span of six lives which carries us back to the date of Haydn's first symphonies (1755), making a life cycle for this specific symphonic form of about two centuries. The epic poet Chœrilus of Samos complained in the fifth century B.C. that everything had been written: *νῦν δ' ὅτε πάντα δέδασται* ('Now that all has been apportioned'). Young Sibelius might have thought the same. Two mountain barriers must be passed by any corporal aspiring to the baton of Field Marshal: the last quartets of Beethoven were one; the other was Wagner's *Tristan*. The question for Sibelius, as for Brahms, was: Had the symphony fulfilled its life cycle?

So now he must go home and see what he can do. At heart he is glad to go. At Vienna he had sketched music for the

Kullervo myth. Czarist Russia was at its infringement of Finland's popular liberties. The political ferment set Sibelius turning these sketches into a symphonic poem for orchestra, solo voices, and chorus. It was performed in April 1892, the composer conducting, and its effect was electrical. In a language explicit yet not seditious, and in an art form at once politically timely and æsthetically imperishable, a poet had appeared who could voice the spirit of Suomi. His countrymen knew what it meant. At twenty-six he was a national spokesman.

Two questions were settled. He need no longer doubt his calling: 'Long enough have you timidly waded, holding a plank by the shore; Now I will you to be a bold swimmer. . . .' And in June of that year he married Aino Järnefelt, daughter of a distinguished Finnish family.

II

A smashing success early in life, if an artist understands its proper value, releases him into the world of his peculiar individuality. Lesser men it sets worrying about a repetition of the success: hardier spirits, disencumbered of self-doubt, plunge into exploration of the faculties which make them what they uniquely are. With Sibelius this followed almost at once. Kajanus, on the strength of *Kullervo*, advised him to write a piece which could go into the regular repertory of orchestras and make known his name without exacting too strenuous mental effort from audiences. For this viking voyage Kajanus lent him his own orchestra. The landfall was *En Saga*, and a rugged coast it was. On a wall of Dr. Sibelius's library at Järvenpää hangs a canvas which a painter composed from this saga. Weird and chaotic, it depicts nothing so much as the astonishment of audiences hearing it in 1892 for the first time. One is reminded of Wagner's resolution, after having written two and two-thirds operas of the *Ring*, to knock off from

that seemingly chimerical undertaking and compose what he termed 'a thoroughly practicable work.' That ingratiating potboiler turned out to be *Tristan*, which, after seventy-four rehearsals in Vienna, was abandoned as 'unsingable and unplayable.'

For the rest, resemblance between Sibelius and Wagner ends before it begins. To young composers in the 1890's vigilant of their individualities, Wagner was a wicked ogre who devoured little children and threw their bones under the table. Sibelius was not afraid, but he was careful to keep out of harm's way. The attempts of Martin Wegelius, and of his brother-in-law Armas Järnefelt, to induct Jean into the Temple of the Grail at Bayreuth are amusing to read in the light of their sequel. The neophyte liked the Bavarian hills better than the performances in the Festspielhaus. He was a young Athenian philosopher asked to admire a sermon by Saint Paul on the Areopagus; or, if it came to Nordic myths, he knew a few himself. Later in life his aversion to Wagner wore off and he conceded that some of it might have been an instinct of self-preservation, but there has always been a strong antithesis between his conception of music and Wagner's. When Sibelius does translate Northern mythology into tone poetry, it is without costumes, scenery, lighting, or stage rhetoric. He can create Valhalla without theatre; but when he comes to final grips with his art, it is music, music in pure symphonic essence, and nothing else — no literary connotations. Thus the route which eventually carries him past the barrier of Mount Wagner is introspection. Turning his eyes within, he explores that vast, unmapped wilderness whose farthest expedition hitherto has been the last quartets of Beethoven.

A composer with no taste for politics as such is next tossed into the thick of the fray. Russian pressure is resumed, and Finland retorts with passive resistance. The year is 1899. The popular repertory work which Kajanus proposed

turns out to be *Finlandia*. At its first performance it passed off as little more than a hat-and-coat piece. But the Russian Government soon smelt something scorching and forbade its performance. In Berlin it was played as 'Vaterland,' in Paris as 'Patrie,' but the grimmest joke — and Sibelius recounts it with relish — was that when he conducted the performance at Riga it had to be entitled 'Impromptu.' That it has survived forty years of mayhem by movie organs (*tremolo* and *vox humana*), café orchestras, and brass bands attests its fibre as music. Last winter in Finland, when Russia struck again, it was played everywhere.

By the turn of the century, it was plain that the composer must get out of Helsinki. Too well known, he was too much sought after. Like Ibsen, he had found the solitude of a foreign city conducive to composition, but, unlike Ibsen, he had the alternative of seclusion in the countryside of his native land. Eventually he employed both. But the hermit of Järvenpää was no recluse. For a dozen years he conducted concerts of his own music in the capitals of Europe and mingled with distinguished contemporaries: Strauss, Mahler, Busoni, Weingartner, Debussy, d'Indy. His First Symphony was performed in April 1899, and Breitkopf and Härtel, the publishers of Beethoven, became his publishers. Being asked three decades later, 'What becomes of your manuscript scores?' the composer glanced across at his wife with a look of comic guilt and answered, 'The publisher keeps them.' 'I think that arrangement,' said Madame Sibelius demurely, 'was a little naïve of my husband.'

The decade from 1900 to 1910 is decisive. It begins brightly. A smallish government stipend has enabled him to resign his teaching posts; at Rapallo in a radiant Italian spring (1901) he erects the scaffolding of his Second Symphony; the frustrated virtuoso, reversing one of life's little ironies, composes (1903 to

1905) the next great violin concerto in the classic succession after that of Brahms (1879); and on a pine-wooded knoll overlooking the lake two miles from the railway station at Järvenpää (Lake's End), in the summer of 1904, he watches his rustic villa rise log-tier after log-tier, until, moved in and settled, he records in his diary at the equinox: 'Have begun my Third Symphony.'

But clouds were gathering. From 1901 to 1905 he suffered an impairment to his hearing which threatened to become total. After release from this, an affection of the throat which had troubled him for years required an operation. Attempts in Helsinki were failures. In May 1908 he consulted a specialist in Berlin. This surgeon, eminent but elderly, insisted on performing the operation himself. Thirteen attempts without result. 'Tedious and painful,' says Sibelius, with his habitual understatement. Then a glitter-eyed young assistant was allowed to take over the case. 'He lowered his instrument into my throat and found the bad spot. A strong jerk, a shout of triumph: "*Jetzt hab' ich's!*" — and he pulled out the instrument. I was released from torture.' But not from anxiety. For years he must live under the shadow of uncertainty whether that malignant tumor would return.

III

In the year 1908 Sibelius passes his Great Divide. Threatened with the total extinction of his powers, then reprieved, a man of genius says to himself: 'If I have anything unique to say, I would better be about it.' A first effect of such a shock is to set one reviewing his whole past life. He returns to simplicity. 'Except ye repent and become as little children . . .' In December 1908, at the age of forty-three, Sibelius goes back to a musical form which he had quitted at twenty-four, the string quartet. He speaks in a letter of that period of living

over his childhood and trying to understand the forces which had shaped his being. Again, as so often, 'unmusical Goethe' fortifies him to pursue his solitary path in music. The title which he gave his quartet is *Voces Intimæ*. It is easy to see now what he could scarcely have been aware of then, that he was first wording his Innermost Voices in the simpler form of a quartet before invoking them for the massive and complex scale of his Fourth Symphony.

The Fourth Symphony can be heard coming in the Third. But it was apparently touched off by one of those hours of supreme exhilaration which kindle an artist to the glow of creating. In October 1909, he made an excursion with his brother-in-law, Eero Järnefelt, to the Koli Hills in Karelia. They had only twenty-four hours on the peninsula and no more than two on the summit, but the day was magnificent: roaring wind, dashing waves, flying clouds, bitter cold, sudden hailstorms, again bleak and brilliant sunlight. The landscape is majestic: cold white cliffs, illimitable oceans of forest rolling away to those purple horizons which one seems to see in the later symphonies of Sibelius dissolving into eternity. Since the composer so emphatically disclaims explicit landscape painting in his symphonies, to suggest the contrary would be impertinence, but the dedication of this score to Eero Järnefelt seems at least a souvenir of that day at Koli. He began the symphony in the spring of 1910, worked all summer, carried it with him on tour that winter, and by December at Järvenpää begins to have hopes that it may come to something: 'The symphony is breaking forth in sunshine and strength.' It went with him on tour again in the winter of 1911, was finished in Finland and first performed at Helsinki in April.

And now begins in earnest the repeated experience of Sibelius with belated comprehension of each new work. Genius is nothing if not naïve. It dares, struggles, puts forth superhuman effort,

renounces, suffers, prevails, converts these ordeals into a work of art, offers it to a public most of whom, so far from having undergone such discipline, hardly know that such problems exist; then genius is astonished, puzzled, and hurt that the work is not understood. Eleven years earlier, Karl Flodin had said, 'He composes for at least a generation ahead.' He could now see that fact for himself. As time went on he grew resigned to it and ceased to expect a new composition to be generally understood in much short of twenty years. Even the violin concerto, comparatively early work, was not taken into the repertory of virtuosi until the late 1920's. When first heard in America, it sounded brusque and brooding, a moorland meditation beside gray sea under a gray sky. Today it, too, has become one of the Innermost Voices.

In his *Fourth Symphony*, having emerged from the first of his two ordeals by peril of his life, Sibelius in his forty-sixth year stands at full stature. He was to surpass it, and more than once, but in the *Fourth* he is Sibelius well beyond the Great Divide.

This done, he devoured music like one starved. That autumn in Berlin and Paris he listened to more music, new and old, than he had ever heard before or was like to hear again. Partly it was replenishment, but he also thinks that he was 'trying to gain a momentary release' from his own creative daimon before it set him another task. Furthermore, in listening to the new music, he was making up his mind on contentious points: 'I have always been interested in contemporary and younger composers . . . in order to gain a clearer view about myself. In listening to the quantity of modern music with which I then became acquainted, I came to the conclusion that many present-day composers, in their endeavors to preserve their place in the public eye, through constantly having to produce something novel and sensational had lost the power of composing anything living based on

the old ecclesiastical scales; this, I thought, was reserved for me and others who could live in greater peace.'

To the peace of Järvenpää, accordingly, he returned, and one summer noon not long afterward Mr. Y. A. Paloheimo, later Commissioner General of Finland to the New York World's Fair, but then a boy in his teens, coming over to Villa Ainola on an errand stopped spellbound by some music which he heard sounding from the grand pianoforte. It was the *Oceanides*. Sibelius was composing it for the Norfolk Festival in Connecticut of 1914. His American visit was an idyll between two ordeals: the one which had forged his *Fourth Symphony* and that which was to temper the metal of his *Fifth*. Yale University awarded him a doctorate which is the only style he permits himself to adopt. He was charmed with everything, and in turn he himself charmed everybody. Two sights in America he had set his heart on seeing, a genuine Red Indian and the Falls of 'Neeagara.' His luck was perfect. From the front steps of the Hotel Wendell in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, he saw the circus parade of 'Ranch 101' led in war bonnet and full regalia by no less a brave than the Indian whose profile is on our copper pennies, and he saw Niagara by moonlight. By day the tourists and newlyweds rather put him off, so he went to bed in his hotel, got up in the middle of the night (inveterate night-watcher that he is), and had the Falls to himself. His ear for euphony was vexed by our pronunciation of 'Niagara,' and he is at pains to explain that 'the Indians, like us Europeans, say "Nee-agara." All musicians adopt the latter pronunciation.'

On the Atlantic, homeward bound, came news of the assassination at Sarajevo. No one aboard thought it serious. One month later, World War. His publishers, being German, could not remit his royalties; performances of his works in concert halls throughout the western world earned him not a penny, because

Finland had not been signatory to the Berne convention; his concert tours must now be restricted to Finland and Scandinavia. By autumn, 1916, the deprivation had grown so severe that he writes in chagrin, 'I often ask myself: Is my life to pass in complete isolation from the great civilized countries? Am I no more to experience the delight that a first-class orchestra gives me when I conduct my works?' It looked as though he had won a world only to lose it. Income was an acute anxiety. Between August and November 1914, he felt compelled to write sixteen potboilers.

Yet a Fifth Symphony was stirring in his bones. It had even been a question whether to write a Fifth. Tone poems were the rage. The symphony was supposed to have been squeezed dry by Brahms, if not by Beethoven. 'I have had to suffer a good deal,' he confessed long afterward, 'for having persevered in composing symphonies at a time when practically all composers turned to other forms of expression. My stubbornness was annoying to many critics and conductors, and it is really only in recent years that opinion has begun to change. Perhaps the name injured my symphonies, but since they represent what I understand under the name of symphony, I could not very well provide them with labels that would give a wrong impression of what I aimed at.' In the event, a consequence of his having stuck to his guns is that his seven symphonies form a *corpus*, a main massif of his life-work, round which his choral works, chamber music, and symphonic poems are spurs and foothills. They form the next big mountain system beyond the symphonies of Brahms.

IV

The Fifth Symphony was to be a Mount Stormbound. It was first performed on December 8, 1915, the composer's fiftieth birthday, which was observed as a national event. But as far

back as the 1890's the iron law of his artistic conscience had decreed that, even after its first performance, he keep a major work in hand for revision from two to seven years. So after the festival he laid away the score of the Fifth until October 1916, then returned to his precisising of its form and content. In December of his fifty-first year it was again performed in what the composer, in his innocence, supposed to be its final version. But no. Again his creative daimon bestrode him and again he resumed his rescripts.

World War now in its third winter: March 1917 — Czardom collapses. From the deep-sea hurricane of Russian revolution, swells begin rolling even up into the quiet cove of Järvenpää. That once-tranquil haven resounds at intervals daily with the crackle of firearms. Soldiers shoot their officers. As anodyne to the ferocity of man, Sibelius turns to nature. April 18, 1917: 'There are twelve swans on the lake. I saw them through my field glasses. I also saw six wild geese and an eagle. Strangely poetical.' And in a later entry: 'A wonderful day, spring and life. The earth odors, mutes and fortissimo.' Menacing as the situation is, behagged by war and beleaguered by revolution, nevertheless, as the summer of 1917 wears on, he can summon his forces to begin a Sixth Symphony — whilst continuing to revise the Fifth.

The squall strikes Villa Ainola on January 28, 1918. Midway in the composition of the third movement to his Sixth, he is forbidden by the Communist revolutionaries to leave his own grounds. Is the intent to annoy, or to protect him? He does not know. Above the billowy groves of the Järvenpää countryside rise the villa roofs of authors, scholars, artists, and professional men. To the revolutionary soldiers, strangers in that region, Dr. Sibelius is merely one more of the bourgeoisie and, as such, fair game. To divert his thoughts from this ugly predicament he goes on working at

his Sixth Symphony. Will he live to finish it? Murder is now almost a daily occurrence, and soldiers shoot old acquaintances of the Sibelius family.

On February 11 come Red Guards and search his house for hidden stores of food and arms. 'I did have a revolver hidden in a room on the ground floor of the villa. My house porter, who was present during the search, knew of this, and if he had betrayed me my life would not have been worth much.' As the rummage went on, seating himself at the pianoforte, he played to calm his frightened children. A soldier said to the kitchenmaid: 'Lucky you, to work in a house where you can hear such music.' Two days later back they came and this time ransacked the house savagely. Added to the bitterness of having the 'treasures' of his house pawed over was the spectacle of how poor those treasures were. Unarmed, he had to stand by and watch armed men expose his poverty. After they had left, not knowing whether he and his family would be alive on the morrow, he went on working at his symphony.

When this state of things had gone on about long enough, his friends in Helsinki held a consultation. Robert Kajanus contrived to get up to Järvenpää, obtained permission from the Red Guards, and prevailed upon Sibelius to bring his family to the capital.

Their lodging was a lunatic asylum. Its senior physician was Dr. Christian Sibelius, brother of the composer. The class-conscious proletariat, then in control of Helsinki, demanded custody of the asylum. 'It is already full of lunatics,' replied the senior physician, adding more explicitly, 'And besides, the whole lot of you are mad.' They commandeered it all the same, and so apportioned the rationing of food that in a few weeks the composer 'reduced' forty pounds. In April came the German troops. If they took the city it was feared that the revolutionists, before evacuating, would massacre their ad-

versaries. The diary of Dr. Sibelius on April 11, 1918, asks whether they will be alive on the morrow, the while he admires the orchestration of artillery: 'Crescendo, as the thunder of guns came nearer, a crescendo that lasted close on thirty hours and ended in a fortissimo I never could have dreamed of. . . .'

In a lunatic asylum of a besieged city, on starvation diet, under a revolutionary terror, this indomitable spirit was composing a big work for chorus and orchestra, 'a hymn of praise to the scenery and night lights of Finland.'

Helsinki was relieved on April 12, 1918. Twice in two decades Sibelius had been delivered from mortal peril. Once more it was spring, and he and his were to be permitted to live. His intense relief became a passionate creative exhilaration. Ideas crowded upon him until there was hardly standing room. While he reworked his Fifth Symphony, and continued composition of the Sixth, a Seventh started sparking. That sensation, so familiar to artists, of the complete unreality of their outer lives when they are in full flood of creative composition, is mirrored in a letter of May 20, 1918: 'as if I were preparing to quit this life and in descending into my grave shot an eagle on the wing — sighted well and skillfully without a thought of what was in store.' A sentence in this same letter reveals his scheme for 'the VII Symphony. Joy of life and vitality, with appassionato passages. In 3 movements — the last an "Hellenic rondo." 'Hellenic' is the word. Flexible and concise as Greek itself, midway in the Seventh Symphony sounds the surging exhilaration of that rondo.

V

World War ended, revolution ended, Finland an independent nation: Sibelius finished his stormbound Fifth Symphony in 1919, his Sixth in 1923, and his Seventh in 1924. *Tapiola* and *The Tempest* music followed in 1925 and '26. Is there

to be an Eighth Symphony? Expecting it, the world of music has been sitting on the edge of its chair for the past dozen years. An eighth is reputed to exist in sketches, but Sibelius is no one to talk about his work beforehand: '*Bilde, Künstler, rede nicht.*' His reticence about his creative process arises not so much from secretiveness as from distaste of self-analysis and a feeling that it is beside the point. Does the spring flow? Then why dynamite its sources? Vocal in Finnish, Swedish, German, and French, conversant with English, Latin, and Greek, he has known how to hold his tongue in seven languages the better to speak his eighth, music. It is the one tongue in which he speaks his whole mind, and this music of his speaks with peculiar force to us peoples of the northern latitudes. It is as though for the first time our own Innermost Voices had been uttered in the orchestral symphony.

Not until the late 1920's did his pre-eminence come to be generally acknowledged in the musical capitals of the world, for, with that stern integrity of intellect which shows alike in his face and in his scores, he disdained self-advertisement and, like Father Wotan with his heroes, left his music to stand by its own strength. The events of his life, likewise, can be allowed to speak for themselves. Sincere and concise like the man himself, where is there another modern orchestration closer to Whitehead's austere definition of style? 'Style is the ultimate morality of mind.' And if anyone has pressed forward beyond Mounts Beethoven, Wagner, and Brahms to farther heights, who is it if not Sibelius? The pass he discovered is the one described by Michelet: '*La poésie s'en va cherchant aux terres lointaines. Que cherche-t-elle? L'infini.*' Disclaim landscape painting in his symphonic scores though Sibelius may, all the same its imaginative spell continues to haunt them; but when you reach his Fourth, these symphonic landscapes of the North turn from moorland, sea, for-

est, and lake to the infinitudes within the human spirit. The scene is introspective.

To a good many Americans, the voice of Sibelius is one which seems to understand us better than as yet we understand ourselves. Musical composition is the latest-flowering art of the western world, and we are one of the youngest peoples to take it up. What is awkward for us is that we take it up when that art is full-grown, even perhaps when it has lived full cycle. Normally the process of growth in art, as in life, is from simplicity through complexity, to a more highly evolved simplicity; but we in America come to the composition of music at a period when it has attained forms excessively complex.

In literatures of the spoken and written word, poetry flowers before prose; prose — in the forms of oral saga, then of written history, and finally of fiction — flowers before criticism. Self-consciousness comes late. Thus grammar and syntax were unformulated in the Great Age of Greek literature: not until two centuries later at Alexandria were their rules laid down, after that literature had grown self-conscious. It is of course easier, as it is more natural, to move from the simple to the complex, as music in Europe did, than to move from the complex to the simple, as music in America may need to do — which may be what embarrasses so many of our composers, who either affect more extravagant complexities or assume a forced simplicity, which is worse than none.

Self-consciousness is the bane of modern music. 'As there is no more sure sign of a fine nature than the absence of self-consciousness, so there is no more sure sign of greatness than simplicity.' English poetry was in a similar predicament at the close of the eighteenth century. Complex and formalized, it revolted a young poet by its lifelessness. He revolutionized its forms and renovated its spirit for a century to come. An American composer with the hardihood to begin back at a genuine simplicity

might be laughed at? So was William Wordsworth.

It is only fair to add that the situation is further complicated by the virtuoso orchestra. Aladdin is in peril of being enslaved to his slaves of the lamp. The great creative epoch of music (circa 1720 to 1920) was one in which form was elaborated while performances often remained crude. That epoch has now been succeeded by one in which performance is elaborated. Imagine Shakespeare watching a modern performance of *Hamlet*. Bach never heard his B-Minor Mass, nor Wagner as good a performance of *Tristan* as we of today hear several times a season. The great composers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would be thunderstruck could they hear the splendor of their works as performed today; but our transcription of their organ and chamber music into coloristic orchestration is slightly chilling. It suggests a petition in creative bankruptcy.

There seems to be a law that the highest works of art can only be achieved when the forces which produced them are already doomed and in the act of disappearance. That the art of Sibelius had its foundations laid in the nineteenth century, two decades before our social earthquakes began to be felt, may explain why its superstructure remains so solid. His less fortunate successors register those shocks in the very foundations of their art, and it thus remains a question whether they have yet raised anything which will endure as superstructure.

Yet a clean breach with tradition in the arts may, after all, be necessary. In contemporary history an abrupt break occurs at about the year 1900. It can be observed in the very implements we use. Our first stoves (Ben Franklin's) looked like fireplaces, our first railway carriages looked like stagecoaches, our first steamships looked like sailing vessels, our first motorcars looked like buggies, — man clings to the old with his left hand until his right is confident of its grasp on the

new, — but the airplane looks like nothing else that man has hitherto made. For the first time he has wings. And since it is true that most of our other basic concepts, in science, politics, economics, theology, and ethics, have suffered a similar break with tradition since the turn of the century, it is hardly surprising that a similar rupture can be heard in modern music. But the airplane, for all its complexity, is simplicity itself. And if man's new flight is like a bird's, why not also his new song?

Sibelius, meanwhile, after a lifetime of rather more than his portion of ordeals, had to share last winter the ordeal of Finland's invasion by Russia. Again he refused to leave Järvenpää, and the story comes that he rushed out of doors in subzero weather with an old rifle and took pot shots at the Russian planes as they flew overhead. Little else has been learned, for when he retired from public life he really did retire. His grown children in Helsinki know as little now as ever what is taking shape between his brain and his writing table. Have events stirred him to fresh composition? Despite a recent illness (the informant is Madame Sibelius) he works daily. And will his Eighth Symphony ever be finished? His method is to sketch and re-sketch so long and in such detail that when the sketches are done the work stands virtually finished. The writing out in full score may take only two or three weeks. It is also reported that he has an aversion to finishing the Eighth lest it give him the sensation that his life — his real life of artistic creation — is ended. Perhaps, like the Second Part of Goethe's *Faust*, it is to be published posthumously as a last will and testament. Yet, if it never appears at all, we shall have no legitimate grievance, for what artist in our time has wrought longer or better? ' . . . As if I were preparing to quit this life and in descending into my grave shot an eagle on the wing — sighted well and skillfully without a thought of what is in store.'

KING WILLIAM LAND

BY GONTRAN DE PONCINS

I

THE Eskimo, preëminently a nomad and a sea hunter, is driven from point to point round an irregular circle by the need to feed his family, and it is the revolution of the seasons that directs his march. When the run of Arctic salmon in the river is over, he goes down to the lakes to jig through the ice. Meanwhile, he has begun also to trap the white fox. As the winter advances, as the ice thickens too deep for jigging and the big fish lie on the lake bottom refusing to be lured up, the Eskimo is forced to move on, for his family and his dogs consume about fifty pounds of food a day, an average terribly hard to maintain. The next curve on his circle is sealing and polar-bear hunting on the frozen sea. Then, with the spring, the caribou pass through on their way north; the great season of visiting opens; and in the autumn the river fish return. Thus the Eskimo is constantly on the march, driven by hunger through a cycle of peregrination whose signal characteristic is hardship and whose highest reward is not possession, nor leisure, but a full belly.

The Eskimos do not look upon their country as a harsh land, and among the variety of reasons for this I should put first the fact that it is their own, their unchallenged kingdom. Not only are they the undisputed owners of this land, but they are alone in it. All the caribou of the plains are theirs; theirs all the fish in the lakes, all the seal in the sea. No man disputes their prizes with them. No

marauders burst in to steal their poor possessions and enslave their children, as among certain peoples of Africa. No armies, as in Europe, invade them to deprive them of their dominion over the snows. Because theft is unknown in this quasi-communist community, because their poverty is unenvied and they have no neighbors to hate them, they are able to do as they did when we left the lake one morning to go out on the sea: store in their igloos what will not be needed for sealing, plant their fishing tackle upright on the round boss of the snowhouses as landmarks, and start down the trail without so much as turning their heads to see if all is safe—the front door, as it were, locked, the windows all shut, the gate pulled to.

Looking at them as they loaded their sleds, seeing how each was helped by the rest, how all labored in common with no hint of selfishness as they ran from igloo to igloo, from sled to sled, with what smiles and laughter they chatted and drank their final mugs of tea before the great whips whistled in the air that a moment before had been coiled like lassos on the snow, it came to me that here was indeed the communal life, the Biblical clan which hitherto I had imagined only against a background of sand and date palm.

Once away, there was a ceaseless bustling. Men and women ran alongside, the long whip flashed out at one or another of the dogs; here was a crone who complained and was given a word

of comfort, there an old pot swinging loose that had to be retied; and of a sudden a sled would sway, guided so that the runners would not meet the fresh dog droppings whose momentary warmth would melt the carefully spread coat of ice.

And with all this we seemed hardly to advance through the wide and monotonous expanse. Our first stop was near a fish camp, where each man had his cache, and provisions were to be taken on. The stones were removed, the cache opened, a great chunk of frozen fish hacked off with an axe; and this was to be their food pending the catching of the first seal. Whenever we stopped, the driver would stand off to right or left of the dogs, and with a long slow flick of the whip caress each husky that remained standing. At that gentle stroke, the dog would lie down; but indeed most were so trained and habituated to this that as soon as they stopped they lay down in their tracks. Then there were a hundred things to do: unload the old woman, for her muscles ached; give suck to the baby; disentangle the crossed harness of the dogs; drink tea; after which the men would stand apart with their pipes and talk shop.

The Eskimo is never at a loss for reasons to linger by the way. Because his life is hard, his leisure is precious; and, except among peasants and common laborers, there is no such pleasure taken from an hour's idleness in our civilized world. I was learning, besides, that the Eskimo always does what he wants to do the moment the notion comes to him of doing it. This day was the first on which I began to see in the Eskimo something attractive, and in his existence something a civilized man might envy.

Stopping in a blizzard meant nothing to these people if they decided suddenly that they wanted a cup of tea. One might be within two hours of camp, the stop might mean another night in a hastily built igloo — it made no difference. The sled would glide to a halt,

an empty box would be turned on its side, a Primus stove set within, and tea would be brewed. The wind was cutting you to ribbons, but what of that? It did not prevent Unarnak and her mother-in-law from enjoying a tranquil chat together, nor Utak from amusing himself peacefully by pulling his son round and round on a tiny sled while the child squealed with joy. On shipboard in a heavy sea you watch the porpoises at play and wonder that they can take it so easily: the Eskimos are like those porpoises.

That night our igloo was built in total darkness, and while Utak laid block on block I stumbled round outside with a native shovel, tamping the snow down into fine powder and tossing it against the sides of the igloo, after which I smoothed it down to fill the chinks between the blocks.

I had learned by now what my share of the work of installation was: bring in blocks of snow for water; unpack the boxes; start the Primus stove going; set up the drying rack over the stove; lay out mugs, biscuits, and the tobacco tin on the *iglerk*; replenish the water bucket with snow; see that the candle stays upright; keep the Primus from clogging and going out. You stop the sled at six in the evening, say, and it is not far from eleven o'clock before everything needed has been done and you are finally able to lie back on your skins and enjoy the bliss of a cigarette. And the next morning it has all to be undone again.

Next day it was Utak who was the first to sight the camp, and out of his belly rumbled the word 'Igloo!' — that word so magical that its very sound in these spaces suffices to efface all fretting and weariness. After a camp is sighted, the intervening time falls into two periods. You see it in the distance and are half an hour away from it. You leap on to the sled and sit humming because you are in sight of port. Five minutes before you make port, this beatific peace

drops away, a tremor of excitement runs through dogs and men, and the sled begins to fly as if burdenless over the ice until with a flourish you pull up and the dogs stop dead in their tracks.

II

The seal camp was built in the shelter of a sort of bluff that fell sheer into the sea. What was now the ridge of this bluff had once been the seashore, but with the passage of time the land here had risen to a considerable height. Since we were traveling on the sea, we had come upon the camp round a small peninsula, seeing it first from the right, and only the dark spots made by the dogs, and the harpoons standing like pen strokes in the air, had been visible as we advanced. The drift here was so heavy that the blocks of the igloos were buried beneath it, and what we knew to be men coming towards us looked at first like so many shapeless dark forms.

Strange faces, these were, for wherever the snow had fallen upon them it had instantly frozen, and behind those white patches of frost it was hard to discern the human visage. Ice hung from the eyebrows of these men as from crossbars on an iron fence, hiding three quarters of the eye. It turned their moustaches into Venetian glass and came down from their fur collars over their chests to lend them the beards of Jewish prophets. Who, I said to myself, is this Eskimo Santa Claus coming towards me? It was Tutiak.

'Pollak-pak-tu-tin?' he said with a grin. ('Have you come to visit?')

Ohudlerk came in from the sea to greet me, and I stepped towards him. My hand was still in my glove, but he drew off his mitt ceremoniously, for Eskimos do not shake gloved hands. When you arrive at a camp you must shake the hand of everyone, without exception. It may be that one of the women, her child slung in the deep hood hanging at her back, will, out of shyness, not offer her hand.

You must approach her and take her hand. Her eyes will flash with pleasure and she will lower one shoulder, jerk herself slightly; half out from the hood will tumble the child; and this bewildered little figure will hold forth its hand. If it does not, the mother will take it and place it in yours.

The Eskimos learned the handshake from the white men, but they have, if I may say so, transformed it into something Asiatic. It is no longer a handshake but a slow ceremonious elevation of the hand to the height of the face, and, once arrived there, it is accompanied by a charming grin. I have never seen it without thinking of two mandarins greeting one another at the entrance to a pagoda.

Remembering that I had not a great deal of grub left, I considered that I should be safer if I had my own igloo. All the men lent a hand in building it, and it was scarcely finished before it was invaded by the whole camp. The number was not great, — a seal camp never embraces more than four or five igloos, and here there were only three, — but they were all present, standing, seated, waiting, stretching forth their hands to the tobacco tin. Half my provisions went in two hours, and, while I was desperate, they were enchanted. They could not have been gayer had they been pirates dividing the loot of a newly captured prize. Utak was the happiest of them all. He had put himself in charge of the pillage, and everything he could lay hands on was being distributed — his own grub, I must own, as much as mine, for the important thing was hospitality, ownership was nothing. One fellow turned up my tin of butter, and, as the butter was frozen, they would cut into it with a spoon, dip the spoon for a moment in their tea, and lick the spoon clean at one gulp.

I am not a very methodical man, but I had had some notion of rationing my grub according to the number of days I should be out. This was not a procedure

compatible with Eskimo life. I could never make these people understand the principle of rationing. In the same way, when they saw me make a note of what, in the course of bartering for primitive objects, I had paid for a seal-oil vessel or a native knife, they would roar with laughter.

I must describe Ohudlerk's igloo. It might be called 'Stench and Family Life.' You crawled through the usual porch — the *tor-sho*, or neck, of the igloo — and when you put your head inside the body of the snowhouse you were assailed by a warm stink that all but strangled you. This noble aroma came from a niche to the right of the entrance which Rembrandt might have been delighted to paint. It was heaped with the carcasses of skinned and frozen foxes, with quarters of polar bear and seal, all stiff and smeared with frozen blood. This niche has a name: *Ne-ke angi-y-uk*, it is called — or, in the parlance of the North, 'The Big Feed.' When anyone at all is hungry — whether a member of the family or another — he has only to bend down from the *iglerk* beside which the treasure is piled, put out his hand, and, having filled his mouth with what he can cram into it, fling back the rest.

Odor, but warmth, too — the gentle warmth of the seal-oil lamp kept trimmed by Ohudlerk's wife; odor, and, above all, collective life visible in its variety and simultaneity. Ohudlerk would be sitting in the middle of the *iglerk*, staring straight ahead with a concentrated gaze while he spun out long sentences, explanations in which he became entangled and lost, concerning his day's hunting. Nobody would listen to him, yet everybody formed his audience.

In a niche on the left sat Kakokto and his young wife: he with a broad Roman face, good features, but a little bovine with his low forehead and his hair, cut in bangs, forming a sort of skullcap on his head; she gentle, obviously in love with him, although he gave no sign of

response to her feeling. Neither of them spoke. She sat sewing hides, plying the strong triangular needle, while he, his hands on his knees, stared into the void.

At the deep end of the igloo the children were at play, naked on the caribou skins and, like all children, inhabiting a world of their own. The Eskimo young have prodigious vitality, never display the slightest fatigue, and, like slum children in our cities, go to bed only when their elders do. In Ohudlerk's igloo they would knock against their grandmother, roll over and over, and when the old woman grumbled they stopped playing, stared at her a moment, and resumed as if she were not there.

From time to time the lamp spluttered. The old woman leant forward and with her misshapen hands fished round in the blubber for the bits of cotton used as wick, brought them up to the edge, shaped them in her fingers, and then in the silence went on scraping her skins.

III

I was unlucky at this camp, for the sealing was poor, and when Utak proposed to go north for polar bear I jumped at the chance of activity. Tutiak and Kakokto had gone earlier in the day, and we expected to catch up with them. By mid-afternoon we saw two black dots far ahead, forced our dogs, and came up with our friends. As evening fell, they ahead and we following, we reached what seemed to be the end of the world. Before us rose a high bluff sloping down to the surface of the sea at either side; behind this small and hilly island lay the gigantic world of pack ice that is driven down here by the wind from McClintock Channel to pile up, miles wide, on this promontory of King William Land.

We camped, built a single igloo for the four of us, and disposed ourselves in it. I had got into my sleeping bag when Tutiak came through the porch into the opening of the igloo, on all fours, pushing

before him an enormous basin filled to the rim with great hunks of seal.

We made the usual tea, and then . . . I do not know what the hour was, but I, who had dozed off, woke up. Under my eye were the three Eskimos, three silhouettes lit up from behind by the uncertain glow of a candle that threw on the walls of the igloo a mural of fantastically magnified shadows. All three men were down on the floor in the same posture — on their knees, torsos bent forward with bottoms in air and faces near the ground, motionless except for their greedy hands and their greedier chaps. They were eating, and whether it was that the smell of the seal had been irresistible, or that the idea of the hunt had stimulated their appetites, they had embarked upon a feast. Each had a huge chunk of meat in his hands and mouth; and by the soundless flitting of their arms, immeasurably long in the shadows on the wall, I could see that even before one piece had been wholly gobbled their hands were fumbling in the basin for the next quarter. The smell in the igloo was of seal and of savages hot and gulping: their hair covering their foreheads, their moustaches hanging low over their mouths, — at least Tutiak's moustache, — their enormous jaws, they inspired in me so ineradicable a notion of the Stone Age that I think always of this scene when I read or hear of prehistoric man.

There were three men, and there must have been fifty pounds of meat. They ground their teeth, and their jaws cracked as they ate, and they belched — Tutiak most wonderfully of all — with long cavernous fatty belchings as of brutes drowned in contentment. They had long since stopped cutting the meat with their circular knives: their teeth sufficed, and the very bones of the seal crackled and splintered in their faces. What those teeth could do, I already knew. When the cover of a gasoline drum could not be pried off with the fingers, an Eskimo would take it between his teeth and it would come easily

away. When a strap made of sealskin freezes hard — and I know nothing tougher than sealskin — an Eskimo will put it in his mouth and chew it soft again. And those teeth are hardly to be called teeth. Worn down to the gums, they are sunken and unbreakable stumps of bone. If I were to fight with an Eskimo, my greatest fear would be lest he crack my skull with his teeth.

But on this evening their hands were even more fantastic than their teeth. I can still see Tutiak, in a moment of respite, licking the palms of his hands, then sucking each of his fingers, and finally scraping between the fingers with his snow-knife, slowly, with that concentrated air of a thoughtful animal — and then beginning over again to eat of the seal. . . .

The pack over which we were hunting the polar bear was like nothing I had even seen in a picture. There was no majesty here, no huge impressive ice floes, no icebergs resting like high men-o'-war on the water and clearly outlined against a blue sky. Here there was no water, there was nothing but pack ice — a jumble pale blue and green at the base, built up by a distant and crazy giant and filling all space with its grotesque shapes. This was the surface of the moon, a limitless chaos through which we moved, tiny figures with our toy sleds lighted by but half a sun — for already the season had come when only half the sun appeared over the horizon. The light was fast dying out of this source of earthly life. Repeatedly we would have to cut out a breach in the pack, a passage as through a jungle. The harness of the dogs would catch on the jagged points, the beasts would howl with fear as they were almost impaled, and again and again a sled would hang suspended, like a motorcar over the edge of a bridge, while we dragged and bumped our way through this broken and craggy landscape. We were pygmies attempting the labor of giants and coming to nothing but grief. Twice I

had slipped with my knee wedged so tightly between blocks of ice that I thought the bones must crack, and I went limping on.

And still no bear! Tracks, yes, as wide as my two hands; but that was all. I was not made for this sort of chase. I was completely fagged out. Weariness and absence of physical control and equilibrium induced in me a surge of foul temper, and as I stumbled and limped on I thought of the absurdity of continuing to look for bear in this stupid, petrified, and undoubtedly endless and fantastical chaos.

But my Eskimos would not give up. They would pile up blocks of ice against an iceberg, dig their way to the top with the help of their knives, and there, pulling out telescopes bartered at the Hudson's Bay Post, would stare long and carefully in every direction. 'Baboons with telescopes,' I said scornfully to myself; and in a way I was not too unjust, for the seriousness with which they gazed had something exceedingly comic. But the comedy was not rich enough to amuse me (what comedy would have been?). I was concerned for my knee, my fingers were still frost-bitten, and I was drowning with weariness. My brain had shrunk to the dimensions of a dried raisin. Stubbornly, painfully, almost maliciously, it clung to a single thought, made room for no other image: 'I am cold!' I was not cold as people Outside are cold. I was not shivering. I was *in* the cold, dipped into a trough where the temperature was thirty degrees below zero and where I turned and rolled over and over in search of a nonexistent issue. And from time to time I would shake with anger: 'If it is written that I shall see a fire again, I shall warm myself, *I shall warm myself!*' The four words filled my mind; I whispered and muttered them again and again, like an oath of vengeance. 'It's no good arguing with me,' I mumbled. 'I won't listen to anyone: I shall warm myself, warm myself with anger.

I shall put my legs into the flames, and if they sizzle I shall not draw them out. That will teach them!'

How long this went on I cannot say. Time had fled, and for me there was no difference between a minute and an æon. I went out of my head, probably. Then of a sudden, without transition, even I could see the lights of the camp a hundred yards away. Like a ghost, I stepped into reality.

IV

Twenty-five men, women, and children made up the entire population of King William Land, a territory ten thousand miles in extent. A Texan or an Australian would not think it at all remarkable, perhaps, but for a European the notion of this sparsity was hard to get used to.

I had now seen more than half the inhabitants of the island, and here at the Post I should see them all before my frostbitten fingers were sound again and I could once more take the trail. Not only they, but Eskimos from the mainland and from other islands, too, would come through the Post in time, for this rude and none too spacious shack, with its little stove, its washbasin standing on the corner of a table, its box of tools rusting in the porch; this Post cut off from all the world, with no sending wireless, no boat, no sled or dogs of its own, where twelve pencils formed part of the annual restocking and there was not even a flint for my pocket lighter; this outpost set down in the remotest corner of desolation, represented to the Eskimos of the whole Central Arctic the sum of the white man's civilization — a storehouse of wealth, a seat of luxury, the capital not only of their world but of his.

All of these Eskimos came to the Post at least once a year, and some came a good deal oftener, though it cost them a month on the trail to come and go again. Mostly, they came to trade; but there were many who arrived only in

order to visit. Probably because of their isolation, perhaps because the difficulty of life in this harsh land lends especial price to conviviality, the Spirit of Visiting is a goddess more highly esteemed among the Eskimos than among any other people I know. They need no reason to start out: in a moment they have lashed their sled, they are off in a blizzard; they travel ten days, fishing and hunting on the way to keep themselves alive; and on the evening of the tenth day they pull in with a great barking of dogs and swishing of whips. Snorting and puffing in the darkness, they shuffle into the Post and sit down in the outer room reserved for them.

The Post Manager, torn from his musings or his magazine, goes out to speak to them.

'Have you brought many foxes?' he asks the head of the family.

'No fox,' the Eskimo answers.

'And what have you come for?'

'*Pollak-pak-tunga*,' says the Eskimo with a wide grin. ('I am visiting.')

Of course they will have said to themselves that there will be other Eskimos round the Post; and the prospect of a feast in another man's igloo will have been enough to persuade them to drop what they were doing — fishing or trapping — and be off instantly in obedience to this strongest impulse in their existence — visiting. Let the fox be as plentiful as it may, let the fish run as never river has seen fish run; once the idea of visiting has entered the Eskimo consciousness, nothing can displace it. And great as the adventure is for those who visit, it is no less an event for the visited. In summer the newcomer plants his tent, in winter he builds his igloo; and in the morning, when the Post Manager looks out, the lonely shack has become a camp, the sole igloo has been surrounded by three more of these white mushrooms; and the trotting between tent and tent, between igloo and igloo, the feasting here or there, are one of the very deep sources of Eskimo joy.

Trading at a Hudson's Bay Post is a struggle in which two mentalities, the white and the Eskimo, meet and lock. In the end, each is persuaded that he has won the match — the white man because in this barter he has got his 'price,' and the Eskimo because he is convinced of having got something for nothing.

Your Eskimos turn up with sacks of foxes and signify that they want to trade. The trading is done at the Store, which stands some forty yards off from the Post proper. You lead them out, and as they troop over the snow there is a good deal of strangled laughter. What a great farce this is! Once again they are going to do the white man, and once again the white man is not going to know what has happened to him. All those wonderful things that fill the Store are to be theirs for a few foxes. What can the white man want with foxes? In the igloo, a foxskin will do as a clout; but, even to wipe things with, the ptarmigan makes a better rag. It isn't possible that the white man should have so many things that need wiping!

One by one, like Arabs into a mosque, they file into the Store, wives and children at their heels. And though they have been inside before, each time that they see these treasures they stand stock-still, silent, stunned. The Manager's house, the *igloo-pak*, is wonderful enough; but it is nothing beside the Store. To people for whom a rusted file is a treasure — Amundsen speaks of Eskimos traveling six hundred miles to get a few nails — this is the holy of holies. Here are whole boxes of nails, whole rows of iron files. They raise their heads and see fifty teakettles hanging from the ceiling almost within reach. Dazed, excited, they look at one another. The notion that, thanks to a few tufts of frozen fur, they are going to possess these treasures is too much for them. It sends them off into brief gusts of nervous laughter.

And what an amazing being this white man is! Not only does he have all these

pots and kettles that you see, but every year a new lot arrives. He must have, buried in his distant country, immense caches of pots and kettles. And the calico! And the tins of tobacco standing in rows on the shelves like divinities, motionless and magnificent!

Meanwhile the white man has gone round behind the counter and is examining his books. Virtually all of these Eskimos are in debt to him, and he smiles from his side of the counter as if he expected that old debts were now about to be paid off and new ones contracted.

The first Eskimo, the most important among them, comes forward. He is impressed. He had forgotten the magnificence of the Store, and although it had been discussed again and again in the igloo, the reality is much more dazzling than all that had been remembered or imagined. He sets down a sack upon the floor, and as he unties the knot the room is filled with murmured commentaries. He opens the sack, hauls out something vaguely white and shapeless, and sets it on the counter, where it knocks hollowly with the sound of wood. This is a fox. I do not believe that most women in Paris or New York would give very much for a fox as it looks when it is put down on the counter of an Arctic store — grimy, yellowy white, covered with frozen blood.

The white man stands smiling while the Eskimo hunts round in his mind. Finally, in a firm voice the Eskimo announces: —

'Ot-chor-lol' ('Coal oil.')

'Ta-mar-mik?' the white man asks. ('A whole fox worth?')

'Eh-eh!' says the Eskimo, signifying 'yes.'

The white man disappears for a moment and returns with one or two tins of fuel, which he passes over the counter. He disposes of the first fox, and the Eskimo brings forth another. All this has been carefully planned in advance. The poorest foxes are presented first; for if

the white man should take it into his head to insist upon the payment of an old debt, it will not be the best skins that will be lost. But the white man seems not to be thinking of the debt and is still smiling across the counter.

'Ti-pa-ko,' says the Eskimo this time. ('Tobacco.')

'Ta-mar-mik?' the white man repeats.

This repetition of the 'whole fox worth' bothers the Eskimo. He is seized by a vague fear, dares no longer affirm himself, and says finally in a meek voice: —

'Napi-dlu-go.' ('Cut in two.')

Here is a problem he had not foreseen. What is he going to take for the other half of the fox? He looks at the ceiling and murmurs: —

'Na-una.' ('I don't know.')

Suddenly an object on a shelf brings something to mind, and he points.

'Tam-na-lol' ('That thing there.')

The trading goes on, and each time that the white man shoves a fox under the counter the Eskimo learns that that fox has been exhausted. So long as it remains on the counter, it continues to possess purchasing power.

The first three or four foxes are easily bartered. There are the things the Eskimo cannot do without — coal oil, tea, tobacco, rice, flour. But by the time they have reached the fifth fox, the Eskimo is lost. Not for want of rehearsal, heaven knows. He and his wife have talked over this trading twenty times in their igloo, have exhausted every inch of every fox; but he cannot remember. He has forgotten, and you feel the void in his mind.

Fortunately his wife is there, the toes of her boots at his heels, murmuring to him and nudging him. Awkward and undecided, he turns towards her, and she, her eyes shrewd and provocative in a face framed by the furry wolfskin hood, prompts him.

'Calico!' she says. 'A cooking pot!' Her eyes gleam as only the eyes of primitive women can gleam.

Ah, yes, he had forgotten. The pot. Two plates. A mug for the child. Three packages of needles. How could he have forgotten! And with this, ideas come to him. 'This! And this! And that!' He points everywhere at once, fearful lest these new ideas suddenly escape him.

In the end he has gone too far, and when he leaves the Store, dragging behind him a wooden box filled with treasures, he senses vaguely that many of these shining objects are of no use to him. Oftener, however, it is simply that he no longer wants those things which, a moment ago, he was unable to resist. And then a second stage of trading begins — that between the natives themselves. And since in their eyes nothing possesses intrinsic value, but the value of an object is great or small according as they desire or disdain it, a handsome dog collar may be swapped for a clay pipe, or a half sack of flour for a red pencil. A needle thus becomes worth a whole fox, a worn strip of leather has the value of a lamp. And what is most curious is that no Eskimo will ever say to you that he has been had in a trade. It is not that his vanity forbids such a confession, but that this can never occur to him. He wanted what he got in the trade; soon after, perhaps, he ceased to want it; but between the two his primitive intellect will not allow him to establish any relationship.

V

Many people imagine that the sun is necessary to human happiness and that the South Sea Islanders must be the gayest, most leisurely, and most contented folk on earth. No notion could be more falsely romantic, for happiness has nothing to do with climate: these Eskimos afforded me decisive proof that happiness is a disposition of the spirit. Here were a people living in the most rigorous climate in the world, in the most depressing surroundings imaginable, haunted by famine in a gray and

sombre landscape sullen with the absence of life; shivering in their tents in the autumn, fighting the recurrent blizzard in the winter, toiling and moiling fifteen hours a day merely in order to get food and stay alive. Huddling and motionless in their igloos through this interminable night, they ought to have been melancholy men, men despondent and suicidal; instead, they were a cheerful people, always laughing, never weary of laughter.

A man is happy, in sum, when he is leading the life that suits him; and neither warmth nor comfort has anything to do with it. I watched these Eskimos at the Post. This house, you would say, ought to mean to them the zenith of well-being and relaxation: they had warmth, they had biscuits, they had tea, and no one asked them to work or pay for these blessings. But look at them! They are dull, sullen, miserable. Physically, they seem shrunk, their personalities diminished and extinguished. Instead of laughing, they brood; and you see them come in, take their seats on the bench, and remain like sleepwalkers, expressionless and spiritless, waking just barely enough, when you pass, to give you a polite smile and then relapse into blankness. But open wide the door, fling them into the blizzard, and they come to. They wake up suddenly; they whistle; their women scurry about, their children crack the triumphant whip, their dogs bark like mad: an impression of joy, of life, fills the environs of the Post. In no time at all they have disappeared; the tempest — their cherished tempest of the Arctic — has blown them over the ridge like so many leaves.

It had seemed to me for some days that Kakokto's wife had been looking sulky. I mentioned it to Paddy at supper one evening, and a moment later I said to him: —

'That fellow from Adelaide Peninsula, Kukshun: what's he hanging round here so long for?'

Paddy smiled. 'You know,' he said, 'you've hit on something. She's upset because of him. Kakokto and Kukshun have been exchanging wives, and as usual the wives were not consulted. Lady Kakokto does not find Kukshun to her taste; a little briny, shall we say? It's put her out of sorts. She's one of the few women round here who are in love with their husbands. Kakokto doesn't care specially about her, and he'll lend her to anybody who asks for her. For one thing, it's a tradition that has to be observed; for another, friendship has its obligations.'

He went on to explain that the exchange of wives was common among the Eskimos. It is not, as with certain other primitive peoples, a token of hospitality. I myself had been received in the South Seas by chiefs who, in the way of welcome, had offered me a daughter or had begged me to choose a companion among the women of the village. This was different, was a simple matter of sociability, a courtesy not to be refused between friends or visitors. Among hunting partners — the Eskimos often hunt in pairs — it was automatic, a relief from the monotony of existence.

Between husbands, meanwhile, there was never any question of compensation. On the other hand, a 'well-bred' bachelor whose friend accorded him this courtesy would expect to make his friend a little gift as a token of appreciation. The lady, the object of the courtesy, was as little compensated as consulted. Among other articles of the code there was one that was absolutely rigorous: the privilege of disposing of the lady belonged exclusively to the husband. The man who made his request directly of the wife committed a grave infraction of the code and serious trouble would certainly ensue.

To ask an Eskimo to lend you his wife is a thing so natural that no one will hesitate to put the question in a

crowded igloo within hearing of half a dozen others. It does not so much as break the thread of conversation, and the husband will say yes or no, according to his momentary mood, with entire casualness.

It might seem from this that the native woman lives altogether in a state of abject inferiority to the male Eskimo, but this is not the case. What she loses in authority, as compared with the white woman, she makes up, by superior cunning, in many other ways. Native women are very shrewd, and they almost never fail to get what they want. Take Utak's wife, for example. It was because of her that we always got away late on the trail. It was because of her that, instead of going off sealing with the others, Utak came down to build his igloo near the Post where she might cajole us who were white men into making her little presents. When Utak went to the Store to trade, Unarnak was always at his heels, and it was comical to see that crab-like pigeon-toed shuffle of hers as she stood never at his side but only behind him, turning as he turned, backing up as he backed up, coming forward as he came forward, hidden behind her man until the moment when she put her head round and murmured to him those calculated suggestions which in the end always made her share of the barter greater than he had intended.

Women were behind everything in this Eskimo world. If one native abandoned a given group in order to go off and live with another, you could be sure it was done at the instigation of his wife. If a couple suddenly grew into a triangular household, you were virtually certain that it was the wife and not the husband who had dictated the choice of the permanent friend. And if, one day, that triangle was reduced to a couple again as the result of a murder, there was never any doubt that it was the wife who had plotted the murder.

ENGLISH LESSONS IN CUBA

BY GLANVILLE SMITH

ANYONE who speaks English and has a fondness for horses and cup custards is likely to enjoy Cuba.

To be good, cup custards must be smooth. The secrets of achieving this the Cuban cooks perfectly know; they make them every day. In fact, in the broad realm of the cooking of eggs, Cuba inherits the full grandeur of Hispanic tradition. Shirred eggs *malagueña*, at the old Ambos Mundos in Havana, are an experience to be remembered with no half-hearted thankfulness.

As for horses, the only kind I really know how to manage are the ones under a drafting table; still, this does not prevent my much admiring the flesh-and-blood horses that neigh and switch their tails. Unsaddled, in pasture, they look noble and mythological; and nothing seems prettier to me, or more truly graceful, than that kind of riding, neither 'professional' nor fancy, which is as careless as breathing — such, for example, as you see everywhere in Santa Clara or Camagüey provinces in Cuba, over the broad grasslands, and down the cane-field lanes.

Of English lessons, too, it is a pleasure to speak. It gives me opportunity to brag of an uncle who, with the unlikely talisman of a doctor's thesis on *French Agglutinations in 'De-* tucked in his vest, went to Latin America and made a fortune. First, however, this philologist wanted some practical Spanish, and his method of acquiring it in a hurry was to go to Madrid and give English lessons. Pupils, as I have often heard him say,

teach you so much. The blunders they make reveal where their language differs from yours in idiom — on which differences, in Madrid, he was quick to seize, and so left Old Spain soon for the New, jabbering Spanish like a born Iberian.

This method of learning another language has always seemed beautiful to me. Its simplicity and its perversity give it a double charm. Moreover, when you teach other people your language, they are the ones to make jackasses of themselves, not you. Yours is the part of charity, dignity, and repose.

All the same, my approach to the foreign languages has always been the groveling kind. Unlike my uncle, I am not a linguist born, and so, until I got into Cuba, I have writhed and agonized, and been ridden by some teacher or other who knew a great deal more than I did about the subject in hand. It has been a career of mortification. Even in Cuba, at first, my panic upon hearing the clickety-clack of talk in the streets sent me crawling to a tutor. Could she, would she, help me to untie the knot of bashfulness at the root of my tongue, and take the wax out of my baffled ears?

Poor woman, she did her best. It was all very painful. Even now I see the grille on her stair, and 'Please ring the bell' written in English under the Spanish phrase, as if — phooey! — I could n't read the latter.

Our efforts were not without fruit. Everybody in Havana speaks English, people say, but it is not quite true. I, for one, spoke Spanish, bewildering

the waiters with pippy-voiced requests for *la sal* or *el vinagre*, and stepping up to the barber with a carefully rehearsed speech meaning 'Please cut my hair.' I must have looked a lamb come to the shearing, or perhaps in my anxiety to sound offhand I said, 'Please cut my horses,' the words for 'horse' and 'hair' being much alike. At any rate the barber, who was learning English in a night class, at once implored me to address him in that language. He wanted the practice. And with a bow he produced a newspaper published by his fellow students, to examine while I had my hair (or horses) cut.

The joke column, written all in English by these hard-working Cuban learners, was indeed uproarious. As my uncle says, it is the mistakes people make in using your language that reveal the structure of theirs. However, I had no time to reflect upon these clues; I was too busy giving the barber a lesson. In class, as he had managed to complain, they tended to discuss the pencil, the inkwell, and the pen, whereas what he yearned for was English to help him in the barber business. This I strove to supply. When next an American had his horses cut in that white tile cave, 'Wet or dry?' my student inquired at the end of the process, dusting him off with a happy flourish.

If, in this episode, I began to sense that English is a sort of currency in Cuba, to be generous with which can be a kindness, I guessed it all the more clearly when I got into the provincial cities, Matanzas for one.

Matanzas is a big out-of-hand seaport that sprawls around a bay and pushes up a hill or two. It has a sleepy cathedral in its middle, and, on the road to La Playa, a neighborhood of villas, gray, classic, and columnar, like Pompeii before the eruption. There are caves near by, for people not yet through with caves. Best of all, above it looms a breezy ridge where the Casino maintains a shrine of religious pilgrimage, the Cuban Monser-

rate. This is a spot worth visiting, and a great many people go there without need of advice from me, to solicit miracles of the Virgin, and to eat ice cream.

Eastward from the Monserrate the hill drops away toward the harbor, with the city in its lap: the various-tinted plaster facets of the houses gleam in the strong sunshine, the two rivers glint, and sounds of bells rise from the belfries that protrude from among the brown tile roofs. The other way, behind the ridge, lies the Vale of Yumurí, a bowl among tawny hills, floored with the fresh green of sugar cane, and dotted with gray-boled palms. Nor is the ridge top one of those usual hills in the tropics, where, in a flood of perspiration, you arrive only to find the view blotted out by the bushes. Its grass is as smooth as the Casino's billiard tables down in the city, and on the benches well-pruned laurel trees cast their shade. It would be hard to imagine a more pleasing site for an English lesson, which was what it was used for the day of my visit.

On the way up I had had a Spanish lesson of a kind. Down the road toward me came a car containing a young islander and his sweetheart, and since their speed was such that they could n't negotiate the next hairpin bend, they shot through a barbed-wire fence instead, and smash-bang on into the brambles. Why they did not go off one of the several handy cliffs I cannot say. No, these sweethearts of the Jazz Age lit right side up, the girl leaning back in a nerveless style, and the boy leaping out instantly to give the radiator several smart and angry slaps. What he told his car, while it cowered there among the bushes, was intended to teach it never to do such a thing again.

Having noted the idioms employed, and that nobody was killed or injured, I plodded on shrineward and heavenward, and soon was giving the English lesson of which I have already spoken.

My student was a Cuban with his coat over one arm and his straw hat on the

back of his head. He was a mathematician by intention, but a rural school-teacher at the time for the reason that all schools of higher (or even high-school) learning on the island had been closed for several years. Before he could go on with his Calculus and Theory or Real Numbers he was having to mark time, like so many of his stalled generation.

But marking time is impossible for some people. This chap, for instance, while the Havana University stood locked up to humble its political pride, would toil up to the Monserrate when his school was out, and occasionally find Americans sight-seeing there who were willing to help him with his English. Who knows — perhaps acquiring an education in this catch-as-catch-can fashion has virtue in it. Certainly my student showed a zeal I do not remember in the classrooms of my own college days.

Not to be outdone in ardor, I gave him what help I could, perched there above some of earth's most celebrated landscapes. With soul recently seared by the Havana Spanish lessons, I was in a mood to teach. Oh, the bliss of being on top again! Nor was I anything but patient, admiring, and distinct of utterance. The recent date of my tutoring also saw to that. There was not a moment's relaxation until the sun was ready to set, when, for a harmoniously contrary motion, we arose, and, dusting off the seats of our pants, trudged down into the sloping streets of the city.

While teaching English in Cuba I have sometimes thought with discouragement how hard it is to achieve mutual understanding when not only are terms dissimilar, but the things they represent. Even a quite simple word like 'door' can bring different images to people of different countries.

Certainly an American in Cuba soon notices that the house doors are of an unfamiliar bigness. When a Cuban dies, it would seem, he does n't want his pallbearers to bark their knuckles on the way out; in fact, the door is built big

enough to admit a hearse. Its two huge leaves, studded with iron stars, are seldom unclosed. Doors cut within these doors do for the comings and goings of every day. To bid one open, you thump a knocker cast in the form of a dangling hand with a ball in its fingers, and then step through. A bridal party enters, or the trash is fetched out, all at this same portal; it is front door, back door, and often garage door too; and when a Cuban tot learns the word, this is the formidable institution it henceforth brings to mind.

Through such a door my grateful student ushered his teacher, and as he turned the key he made a beautiful little speech, putting the premises unconditionally at my disposal. Here was my Matanzas home.

It seemed delightful to get a house, with a patio in it full of roses, in return for an afternoon of amateur pedagogy. I looked about with real interest. But again terms are misleading. My Matanzas home was not a 'house' in the Minnesota sense, really. Rather, it was a series of cool masonry caves arching loftily one into the other, all facing the gay small garden, paved with glistening tile, and with a spiral staircase corkscrewing its way through the dining-room ceiling into my host's wizard-like study above.

These arrangements I liked at once, as I also did my host's mother — a merry, gray, wren-like lady. The cook, too, pleased. She was a graceful colored girl with gold hoops in her ears, to whom it was a rapture to hear the young master conversing in the foreign gibberish.

We had coffee in the patio, and I was shown a letter from another American who had given this student a boost toward better English. 'She says she has been visiting some shut-ins,' he pointed out, inquiring, 'People in jail, I suppose?'

I elucidated. It was an expression a Cuban might readily mistranslate. 'Now we shall have a Spanish lesson!' he

cried, fresh as a daisy, which set me to looking about for my hat; and then he asked in his own language what I had enjoyed most during my stay in Cuba. After the question had been repeated a couple of times I caught it, and for want of another inspiration, though not without some honesty, replied, 'The cup custards,' which he thought very whimsical. I had not yet got into Santa Clara or Camagüey provinces, to see the riding there, or I might have said that. But that, too, he probably would have found droll. Unlike help in English, a new gift counted as a blessing, the old gifts of good custards and effortless riding are things the Cubans take for granted.

Traveling down to the south coast a few days later, to Trinidad, I resolved to give more English lessons. But there was no ring of purpose in this. I was being facetious to avoid being anxious. Going down to that neglected city, cut off even from the Cuban world by its own jealous range of mountains, was like throwing myself out of an upstairs window: I hoped to land in comfort, but there was a good chance I might not. How primitive a place should I find? And how difficult, with my scanty Spanish, was it going to be to settle myself in it?

For these times of dread, fate saves some of her pleasantest surprises. Not only did I give English lessons in Trinidad, but these led on to musical parties, at which my soulful *señoritas* and their English teacher, with bosoms aheave, and refreshments afterwards, swapped Bach and Albeniz, Händel and Lecuona, pieces on a stately old piano whose keyboard the climate had so browned that it looked like a long slab of ginger cake, entirely without the usual landmarks of black and white.

Even the ride in proved memorable. Though I had not realized it until I began working my way from city to city down Cuba's long backbone, the island is an oceanic extension of Texas, with palms. For the most part it is level excellent farm land. Such landscapes I

much enjoy, but in time a traveler craves novelty, and thus when we turned from the rolling plains of Santa Clara into the Trinidad Mountains my half-shut eyes popped open, to peer into the valleys through which the train came hooting.

By the time we had reached Yznaga the valleys had broadened: here were both kinds of Cuban beauty, untamed mountain and fruitful plain. On a knoll in the village an antique tower, of seven tiers of arches, mysteriously beetled; another way, under the horizontal boughs of enormous trees, was a white-walled, tile-roofed, spread-out ranch headquarters, with horses tethered about it. Down the converging roads ox teams strained, and Cuban horsemen came riding in Wild West whirls of dust — sombreros curling, square-tailed pleated shirts worn outside the riding breeches, machetes dangling in leather scabbards, and boots, stitched in florid patterns, well equipped with spurs. At Yznaga I saw Cuban horsemanship in its finest setting.

Trinidad came soon after, at dusk. Against the darkening hill of La Vigía there was a sudden glimpse of church gables and pink campaniles; then, with a jolt, the train halted in what in Spanish days had been the barracks. And very soon, as if dropped into the middle of a comic-opera performance, I was dining at the Canadá on eggs *ranchera*, with a glass of claret and cracked ice in the old-time Caribbean fashion.

Meals at the Canadá were always theatrical. But was I an onlooker or an actor? The whole front of the establishment rolled up, like a roll-top desk, and what went on in the street was certainly amusing. There were the horsemen clattering over the cobbles, picturesque and debonair; also droop-necked pack trains, donkeys with their tattered drivers, or an oxcart drawn up to unload the crooked wood that sent such a smoke from our kitchen into the grimy patio. Beggars and venders of lottery tickets leaned in to chant their chorus of

needs and numbers, while the band played in the square opposite, and the townspeople, chattering and gesticulating, strolled and strolled.

Then again it seemed the action was indoors, and that the passers-by, who always stopped for a look, were the audience.

A troop of cowboys, very bashful, would slowly fold their legs into place at table, awed by the glitter of the metropolis and the gorgeousness of the toothpaste advertising that filled the walls. The traveling men, in white suits ironed to look like oilcloth, conversed in Latin frenzy, pointing quivering fingers in witness to heaven, and strewing the tables and floor copiously with bread-crumbs. Curro, the cross-eyed Andalusian valet, tore in and out with his shirt-tail flying, while Quico, the regular waiter, bowed his way around some party dinner table with a platter of rice-and-chicken aglisten with pimento slices.

There was the Judge in his solemn blue spectacles, and his plump and pretty wife. There was the bootblack who sang as he snapped his cloths by the door, and Señor Rafael Bergansa, supple-waisted and fashionable, who would make a dash for the lopsided piano and comb loud, glib, joyful music from it, pulling recklessly at the lever that made cymbals clash in time with the bass. At his desk sat our proprietor, glasses well down on nose, pinching the breasts of the chickens brought in for sale to learn if they were fat, which set the modest hens to thrashing their wings. And, of course, here was the American foreigner, eating a custard, and over it helping young Luis de Zayas Font with his English.

My friend Luis was the proprietor's nephew. Some day he will inherit the business, and with this future before him, a city absurdly picturesque about him, and a mountain hinterland well supplied with picnic dells for a second zone, he wisely wishes to prepare himself for the

Americanos who may suddenly rush in. Thanks to his kindness, I was soon introduced into salons of neglected old-time Cuban grandeur, and climbed rickety stairs into several old towers. As well as he could, too, he told me stories of the place, of misers and fantastic spend-thrifts, of miraculous crosses and pirate crimes. Cortez sailed to the conquest of Mexico after recruiting in Trinidad what were to prove some of his most famous aids. The city was founded a century before Jamestown, and thus has had time to accrete a fund of anecdote.

Thanks to Luis too, of course, I was launched as an English teacher, with a class of five. On my first morning in town I met the group's paid instructor, a roly-poly Cuban who was an inventor on the side. He had invented a type-writer ribbon that was going to be a godsend to the world, and for a specimen of what it could do he rattled off his name and address: 'Medardo Marrero, On the Post Office, Trinidad.' I was much impressed. This was followed by an invitation to return and meet the class, and so give the young ladies especially — ha, ha, ha! — a chance to hear the speech of a real English-speaking man.

To have my facetious resolve so promptly possible of fulfillment was a joke too good to spoil. Ergo, at ten o'clock the session began.

Imagine the paralysis among the students, brought to this encounter without a word of warning! The young ladies were mute, the young gentlemen could fetch out nothing but blurts, while Señor Marrero stormed up and down because they refused to illustrate the proficiency he claimed to have taught them.

But animal spirits and curiosity soon revived. When the conversation, established on the familiar rocks of the pencil, the inkwell, and the pen, turned to airplane travel, Cuban music, or Minnesota winters, everybody found something to ask or tell; the conversa-

tion, half Spanish, half English, became almost too deafeningly animated. Meanwhile the Marrero family, one head over another like targets at a fair, gazed in through a partly open inner door; and on the street-door sill a trio of little darky girls paused to sit and listen.

Now I had not come to Cuba to teach English, really. That first morning when I took over Señor Marrero's duties I felt most accommodating. But teaching people who are greedy to learn, and who regard your unexpected descent from nowhere with almost the astonishment and interest that Columbus roused in his day, has its fascination. Like playing poker or eating salted peanuts, it leads a man on. I found my evenings being given over to preparations for the morrow, to trying to devise exercises that were not merely useful but marked by some contemporaneity and zip. And in the mornings I found myself brushing the regular teacher aside in a manner that must sometimes have approached the brusque. Poor man! From noisy participation he passed to blowing smoke rings and rocking in a rocking-chair, and then, practically an outcast, to spending his mornings next door 'on the post office.'

From these lively sessions my path led on into musicales and mountain drives, and I felt very happy. 'Now we shall get ready!' the chauffeur would exclaim jovially, after we had been ushered into the back seat; burrowing under the front, he would fetch out an old-time hand pump to harden up the tires. The Trinidad streets are paved with cobbles; as we rode off over them each of us looked like twins. But the country roads were smoother, toward Sancti Spiritus, that hoary *villa*, or the Río Caña with its cascades and bamboos. Frequent repairs made it necessary to take a mechanic with us; he was a merry fellow in a plum-colored suit, and though his straw hat looked neat enough from the front, the back of it had been eaten away by a goat one day when he was at a funeral.

Chico Luis, at the story, fell forward in a helpless fit of laughter.

And so away to the more sophisticated main-line world again, to Camagüey and its saddlery shops, Holguín and eggs *madrileña*, and to Santiago de Cuba with its narrow streets and broad solemn doors. Cuba was too big an island for me to want for mine, but the memory of it haunts me as sharply as if it had been a little one: I hear again the loud flute octaves in lamp-lit plazas while the strollers gesticulate and gabble their Spanish; I smell again the good smell of brown saddle leather, and taste the good taste of a Cuban custard.

For Spain's arts still govern in her Antillean last-lost colonies. The old music, new-blended with the African, still pierces the heart with its strange monotonies; the old architecture, sprouting in new forms, brings to the cities an ornate and courtly charm. Climbing the hill streets of Trinidad or Matanzas, the Passion Week pageantry, with its lurching forests of lighted candles, rekindles the dark splendor of Spain's Catholicism in the islands. And new again in Cuba, but familiar and terrific, the sins and enthusiasms of Spanish politics break out in jets of aspiring patriotism and high-handed tyranny.

As for my English lessons, they did not change the island much; less, in fact, than it has been anglicized by American 'big business.' Nor did I learn much Spanish while I was at them. However, they made an alien place homelike for the stranger; I think affectionately of the big Cuban doors, because not a few of them proved friendly. Of the schools that gave me the creeps then, with their blind windows and padlock-gagged entrances, I think affectionately too, though they have been reopened since under the eye of the military. Mum in those days, they gave me my chance to talk. When I left Cuba I left not only good pupils but good friends behind. The lessons, in fact, continue by correspondence.

BUSINESS UNDER THE X-RAY

BY BRONSON BATCHELOR

I

ON the calendar of the new Congress which convenes in January a major item will be the long-awaited, much-heralded Report of the Temporary National Economic Committee; for this report, finally complete after two years of exhaustive hearings, will bring into focus one of the most momentous issues now facing Congress and the American people. This is the question of future federal policy toward American business: whether further 'reforms' are to be pressed, involving the continuation of an acrimonious feud and fresh economic uncertainties, or whether, in the interest of a national unity made imperative by the defense emergency, government and industry can be brought to sink their differences and pull together in building toward internal as well as external security.

Ever since its beginning, the inquiry headed by Senator O'Mahoney has been a storm centre of controversy. Unprecedented in scope, and with a blanket mandate to examine into the nation's economic ailments, particularly as these may have been 'caused by concentrations of economic power,' the Committee's proceedings have been alternately hailed as a great constructive step in solving the problem of a stalled economy and viewed with misgiving as preparing the way for extensive modifications in the capitalistic system.

Critics of industry place the TNEC hearings on a plane with those of the Industrial Commission of 1899 or with the Pujo investigation of 1907 and the

Pecora probe of 1933. From the first came the first era of 'trust-busting'; from the others came federal control of the nation's banking system and the security markets. Through fresh revelations of business 'abuses' the advocates of further reform hoped that public opinion could be quickly mobilized to support still more far-reaching regulatory measures, including (a) revision of the patent laws to end controls by licensors of products, prices, and sales; (b) federal incorporation for all companies engaged in interstate commerce; (c) federal supervision of life insurance company portfolios; and (d) broad regulation of business trade 'practices' following the model of the Walsh-Healey and Patman Acts.

Business men, on the other hand, were from the beginning somewhat skeptical toward this search for economic 'truth.' They viewed the inquiry as simply another in a long series of political 'witch hunts' to which industry had been subjected ever since the days of T.R.'s 'big stick. Arousing particular concern was the hybrid nature of the Committee itself — half of it composed of members of Congress and the other half representing administrative departments and federal regulatory agencies. The latter, with their 'alternates,' constituted a practical working majority, besides directing, by Presidential designation, expenditure of the Committee's funds.

This mixing of legislative and administrative functions was a sharp departure from precedent. But even more

revolutionary was the fact that these departmental representatives were also to prepare and present the evidence which the Committee was to consider. Naturally, as an outgrowth of their own experience, these officials held preconceived ideas about regulation; thus they were in a peculiarly strong position to use the hearings as a means of obtaining further enhancement of their own power over industry.

Notwithstanding this skepticism, leaders in the various branches of industry about to be investigated accepted Senator O'Mahoney's assurances that the aims of the Committee were constructive and not punitive. Indeed, many progressive-minded business men were completely sympathetic and eager to coöperate with the government in a broad exploration of the economic factors which seemed to hold back and prevent normal business recovery after so prolonged a period of stagnation.

It is doubtful if American business ever prepared for anything quite as carefully as it did for the TNEC quiz. The trade groups concerned assembled every conceivable kind of data; literally hundreds of thousands of dollars were spent by the large corporations like United States Steel, General Motors, Standard Oil of New Jersey, and the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company — to name only a few of those that appeared before the Committee. Under the direction of counsel and chief executives, special staffs worked for months compiling answers to every conceivable question that might be asked regarding corporate policies or operations.

Once under way, the importance attached to the hearings, by both government and industry, was clearly evident. Business executives, in particular, were acutely conscious of the dangers which confronted them. Not only did they object to the extension of further bureaucratic controls *per se*, but they also saw that if managerial prerogatives were to be further circumscribed by additional

governmental encroachments the system of private enterprise was itself in serious jeopardy. Adding dramatic emphasis to this point was the fact that not one but many branches of industry were, for the first time, being trussed together. The kind of blanket indictment that had been previously employed so effectively against the utilities and the railroads was now to be used against the whole of industry. Certainly the stage seemed set for a great public spectacle which might provide the impetus to the possible ultimate socialization of industry.

Like Saul of Tarsus, industry suddenly saw a great light. These serious political implications were not lost on industrial leaders. Rather belatedly they recognized that, before the bar of public opinion, they had little or no standing. They realized, finally, that public good will could not be acquired overnight, nor, in the face of a new 'smear' campaign, could silence pass for virtue.

II

The setting for the TNEC hearings resembled a great surgical operating amphitheatre. The patient was American business, suffering from some strange new disease, or a complication of ailments. Gathered about the table were a group of scientific specialists, each with a special kit of instruments designed to explore and test out various kinds of economic theories.

Particularly noteworthy was the eclipse of lawyers, and their replacement by university professors, economists, and other experts retained by the government to collaborate in preparing the various bills of particulars that were to be filed against different divisions of industry. The language of Blackstone and legal presentations, while still used on occasion, were largely subordinated to the new jargon of economics and to vast arrays of charts and statistics.

Business men do not yet appreciate the implications which may arise from

this important innovation in procedure.

The outline of what the government expected to show was first presented in broad generalizations by economists Willard Thorp, Isador Lubin, and Leon Henderson. Then each particular branch of industry, as its turn came to appear before the Committee, was forced to sit helplessly by—unable even to object or protest—while its special iniquities were spread upon the record. Government witnesses followed each other in a prearranged continuity; supplementing these economic dissertations and briefs came letters and other data extracted from corporation files which high-lighted intra-industry agreements and secret understandings. These memoranda, often written innocently enough, were given sinister and antisocial connotations when read years later before a suspicious-minded committee. Since cross-examination and rebuttal were seldom permitted, the charges made against business which filled newspaper headlines could not be challenged.

Against this heavy factual barrage, the usual type of legal defense proved to be ineffectual. Industry was taken unawares, with the government's economists and experts easily outpointing its own lawyers. Some industries received sharp grueling; others got off lightly with only mild rebukes. The glass companies were pilloried as an unconscionable monopoly buttressed by patent controls which, although admittedly legal, were nevertheless assailed by the Department of Justice as a menace to the public. Automobile manufacturers, on the other hand, were praised for 'pooling' all new inventions without royalty surcharges to the customer.

The investment banking business, strictly policed by the SEC under the Securities Act, likewise listened impotently while days were spent trying to prove that, through Morgan, Stanley and Company (an independent firm in which Morgan partners held only a preferred stock interest), J. P. Morgan

and Company circumvented the restrictions of the Banking Act and still dominated the underwriting of railroad, utility, and other gilt-edged bonds. Insurance companies were charged with having self-perpetuating boards of directors under 'Wall Street control' and ignoring the interests of policyholders. Once more the oil industry was attacked as a monopoly based upon control of pipe lines and marketing facilities by twenty-two major corporations.

Only United States Steel was adequately prepared to meet these new Committee techniques. To match the government's economists it had assembled an equally imposing staff headed by Professor Theodore O. Yntema, of the University of Chicago. The government's studies of industry's problems, such as the basing-point system of prices, were offset by equally authoritative studies setting forth the Steel Corporation's position with regard to particular policies. After the hearings were completed, the Corporation issued a comprehensive three-volume summary presenting its full evidence, which otherwise would have remained completely buried in the record.

But this example of modern public-relations methods stands entirely alone. Unfortunately, it was not followed by other branches of industry. In rationalizing or defending affirmatively trade practices and policies under attack, witnesses for business were generally no match for the agile minds of the government's economic staff.

And when questions turned, as they frequently did, to the interpretation of social and economic trends, many important industrialists were obviously embarrassed. They had neither the broad perspective nor the mastery of fact to challenge the conclusions advanced by the different departmental representatives.

In many instances the chief executives of important corporations had sought to make advance personal preparation for

Committee examination. Some had retained as special coaches well-known economists; others had drawn heavily upon the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and kindred institutions. In a few weeks' time they had sought to attain a specialized knowledge which had taken their preceptors years to acquire.

While a few of these witnesses acquitted themselves well, by and large this type of last-minute economic cramming was only partially successful. By the very nature of things it was not sufficiently comprehensive to provide that seasoned judgment which is the real objective of postgraduate study.

Take for example the case of an industrialist who has grown up from the ranks. He knows the practical workings of his company from A to Z, be it oil, steel, or any other industry he may be in. He knows the engineer's language, the whole nomenclature of his business, but this economic and social quizzing is all something foreign to him. The very highly specialized vocabulary of economists is alone enough to stump him.

Questions with important underlying *social* connotations were often fumbled, while damaging admissions were sometimes made of which the witnesses remained in complete ignorance. And when it came to expressing opinions on subjects afieid from their own highly specialized activity, these practical business men were hopelessly at sea. They were what they were — extremely able and efficient managers, but badly inarticulate when it came to defending the principles of the enterprise system.

Perhaps the most disquieting fact revealed at these TNEC sessions was the plainly evident widening of that gulf of misunderstanding which, during recent years, has so seriously impaired the relationships of business and government. Viewpoints of government officials and these leaders of business differed so completely that each might have been speaking a different language. Even

statistics presented to the Committee were subjected to contrary interpretations; one attacked, the other sought to justify, industrial policies. A conflict of minds and ideology, which had been years in the making, was now openly visible.

III

Quite aside from the published findings, the TNEC proceedings provide industry with at least three important object lessons. The record alone, as a guide to the determination of future industrial policies, deserves far more careful study than it is likely to receive.

First and foremost, increased recognition must be given to the growth of that social consciousness which is now so strong a factor in American political life. To ignore this trend merely means the raising of still greater difficulties for business in the future.

The corollary of this development is that in an era of change, when public attitudes play such a decisive part in the framing of government policy, business leaders can no longer rely, as they have done in the past, too exclusively upon lawyers as mentors and advisers in their relationships with government and the public.

Industry can also profitably follow the example set by the TNEC in experimenting with the use of new techniques. Not only must business men learn to draw upon the economist and other experts much more extensively than in the past, but they too must learn to talk in a language the public understands.

Whether business men like it or not, whether future administrations are Republican or Democratic, the Federal Government is destined to play an ever-growing rôle in shaping the nation's economic destiny. Thus these new professional experts, because of their ability to rationalize and interpret complex economic activities, will exercise a steadily expanding influence both in the determination of federal regulatory pol-

icies toward business and in their administration. What is now vitally important is that their kind of abstract and theoretical knowledge be tempered with that practical experience which can come only from first-hand contact with the problems of business. It is here that misunderstanding begins.

Today in the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Labor, the National Labor Relations Board, and other agencies, large research staffs are at work analyzing not merely special phases of business activity but the detailed operations of all major corporations. The information so gathered is freely interchanged between these departments. This exhaustive research material, and the conclusions and interpretations that are drawn from it, place industry completely on the defensive; industry, being without such information of its own, cannot challenge but must accept whatever facts and figures the government has prepared.

In acknowledging the failure of business to recognize adequately the importance of this new science of economics, Dr. Virgil Jordan, president of the National Industrial Conference Board, recently remarked: 'Most modern business executives keep an economist or a statistician or two about the premises the way their forefathers kept a tutor in the home for French and music, without much harm to their native intelligence and manners.'

Dr. Jordan was not reflecting upon the competence of business men. Pointing out the comparative newness of the research tool, he went on to say:—

It is hard to realize today that twenty-five years ago, when the Conference Board began its work, business charts were a curiosity and statistical measurements of business conditions an esoteric amusement in business management. When we entered the World War, there was no such thing as a monthly index of the cost of living for the country as

a whole, or even any regular monthly information about wages, working hours and employment, until the Conference Board undertook to provide such information. . . . It is striking, too, that not until the depths of the great depression were reached was any serious effort made to measure the extent of unemployment.

The activities of the Conference Board are now supplemented by other organizations like the Brookings Institution, the Twentieth Century Fund, the Falk Foundation, and so forth. Yet the outreach of these agencies is extremely limited. Their findings aid in filling in the much neglected economic background in which industry today operates; but, being couched in scientific terms, they seldom reach down to the kind of language that is readily understood by the average manufacturer, much less even by the man-in-the-street.

Yet, if millions of voters are to be made to see *how* the enterprise system operates, and to understand its points of superiority over other forms of social and industrial organization, it would seem obvious that the case must rest on something more substantial. Industry must begin by telling its own story, its interpretations of the economics of business, not from the top down, but from the bottom up. Once each company understands that it has its own definite responsibility,—in helping to remove the factor of mystery from business, in clearing up often unseen causes that breed suspicion and distrust among employees, stockholders, and customers, in improving the status of its own *citizenship* obligations, in personalizing company leadership to win and hold public respect,—then the critical problem which now causes such great concern will be well on its way toward solution.

Finally, the appearance before the TNEC of this imposing array of industrial and financial executives provided an unusual opportunity to evaluate and appraise America's present business leadership. Its strength and its weak-

nesses were thrown into sharp relief against the political backdrop of Washington. Particularly important are the deficiencies that were thus revealed.

The management of business has, like the country itself, undergone many changes during the past decade. Industry is in a period of transition, forced to readjust from the easy, lush era of the '20s to the sober realities of the '30s. The witnesses who followed one another on the stand particularly emphasized the difference in viewpoint that now exists between older executives and the younger generation of business leaders who are stepping into posts of authority.

The first group, stiff and unyielding, still refuse even to compromise with their altered surroundings; their economic outlook remains thoroughly conservative and orthodox. They believe in Adam Smith *laissez faire*, and the kind of enterprise system which has made possible their own advancement.

Among the younger business leaders, on the other hand, there is today an acceptance of a new philosophy of trusteeship, which, for this new type of executive, Lewis H. Brown, president of Johns-Manville, has thus defined: —

He must plan ahead with the vision of the engineer. In estimating prospective income and expenditure, he must be as accurate as the mathematician. He must have a knowledge of finance and law approaching that of the banker and the attorney. Like the research student in the laboratory, he must be keenly receptive to advances in technical knowledge. In directing his staff, he must have the qualifications of the teacher, plus the psychologist's insight into human nature. If the business executive is to anticipate the ups and downs of the business cycle and make his decisions accordingly, he must be much more than a rudimentary economist. He also must find time to keep abreast of the literature of this new profession, which is already as voluminous as that of law or medicine, architecture or engineering.

And in addition to all these facets which must constitute today's executive, he must be acutely sensitive and adaptable to ever-changing social and economic thought. The tempo of the times is such that any static attitude carried over from the past becomes a positive handicap not merely in evaluating present-day conditions but in anticipating tomorrow's developments.

This transition, however, has not yet reached the point where there has emerged for industry, taken as a whole, genuinely accredited *national* leadership. What there is of business leadership is still largely parochial rather than national in character. Within a given industry certain individuals may have personal influence, but even that outreach is extremely limited in extent. Resolutions passed by important trade organizations, speeches made by outstanding industrialists, reflect little more than wishful thinking or pious gestures. Competition and the antitrust laws prevent any such integration. As between its various constituent parts, the American enterprise system still operates without centralized direction; being completely *laissez-faire*, it cannot be bound to any uniform program of policy or action.

Here we encounter one of the basic causes of industry's present difficulties. No longer can any business man be a law unto himself. In the absence of national leadership to establish a given course, individual companies must carry a correspondingly greater moral responsibility. Otherwise the good works performed by the few may be completely nullified by the failure of others *voluntarily* to follow the example that has been set.

What must now be recognized is that public opinion toward industry inevitably will be determined, not by what the progressive company does, but by what those in the rear ranks, who refuse to move forward, *fail* to do.

(In the February ATLANTIC Mr. Batchelor will describe with equal candor what government officials must do if they, in turn, are to meet business halfway. — THE EDITORS)

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

A PRESENT FOR MARGE

I WANTED to get Marge jewelry of some kind for Christmas — something that sparkled real bright, something that cost a lot. That was what went well with Marge, a big bracelet or a big bright necklace, or something like that. Not that Marge ever looked showy. Nothing she ever wore looked out of place on her. She went with fine things. There's something nice about that. See, she'd never had anything when she was a kid and growing up, and now, whenever she could scrape a little money together and get something ritzy, it made her look like a million dollars.

Irish, my boss, helped me out. He runs the Central Café taproom in the town. I worked behind the bar for him. He gave me trainfare — I didn't make much because I wasn't really a bartender; I just helped around. He gave me the job just to help me out. 'You take the day off,' he said. 'Every guy deserves a day off for Christmas shopping. You take a run into Pittsburgh. You can find better things down there.'

The stores were packed with customers, mostly women. They almost walked over me with their packages — and the more packages they had, the fiercer they seemed to be. If I stepped in front of them, they looked sore. I got plenty of bumps. And all the women that bumped me were big ones. I suppose some little ones shop, too, for Santa Claus, but they missed me.

I saw many things in the stores that I wanted to get for Marge. Gloves and pocket-books and scarfs and swell perfumes and cute blouses and dresses, all done up so nice for Christmas. I wished I had money enough to outfit Marge from head to foot. I couldn't look at things too long. The salesgirls were on me like hawks.

'Are you looking for something?' they would say. Or, 'May I help you?'

'Yes,' I'd say, 'but I haven't decided yet.'

Then they'd go into a spiel about various articles and ask me what style I wanted, what price, and all that.

I was at the jewelry counter in the third store when I saw the bracelet. There was all

the stuff lying under the counters, knocking your eyes out — gold bracelets, silver bracelets, silver necklaces, gold necklaces, rings of all kinds, in nice felt boxes, lying in little cushions so they wouldn't get hurt.

I was gazing at the bracelets when the lady came up to me. She was middle-aged with a stout chest, a red neck, and a flushed, spotty face. She wore nose glasses and had gray eyes that seemed very sharp. I wished the younger girl behind the counter would wait on me, but she was powdering her nose.

'You were looking for something, sir?' the lady asked me.

'I was thinking of a bracelet,' I told her.

'Any particular style? Now these gold ones are very popular this season. Everyone seems to be wearing them . . . they're quite charming.'

She took out five from the showcase and put them on the counter. I picked them up and looked at them, one by one. I don't know, maybe I was wrong, but they seemed a little loud. They seemed too big. I put them down again. I was half ashamed I didn't like them when they were so popular. I moved over to the little silver ones.

'Could I see those?' I asked.

'Why, surely. The silver is always charming. Silver is very nice.'

She took out four silver ones and laid them across the palm of her hand, which was fat. She said this was so I could see how they looked against the skin.

'I think I like them better,' I said.

I did. They were little and delicate and light and frail, like a spring flower. You were almost afraid you were going to hurt them when you touched them. I knew Marge would love them, even if she liked big things mostly. These were really beautiful.

She handed one to me. I held it in my hand, trying not to squeeze it or anything. I looked at it for a long time, thinking how it would look on Marge, how lovely it would look on her. It bent gracefully, like a snake. It was so tiny I almost thought I'd lose it. Tiny, but it stood out. I wanted that one. I wanted that one for Marge. I knew nothing else could come up to that one. And even if

I can't describe it very well at all, you'll have to take my word for it that it was — well, exquisite, like the woman said.

'I think I like this one,' I said.

'It is a beautiful piece,' she said. She wrapped it around her wrist to show me how it would look against the skin. But I was seeing it around Marge's wrist. I was seeing Marge's face when she opened the nice box and pulled it out of the soft cushion and put it around her wrist. It was wonderful thinking of it.

'How much is it?' I asked.

She held it in the palm of her hand and gazed at it. She touched it with her fingers. She looked very calm.

'This one is seventy-five dollars,' she said. She said it as if seventy-five dollars was nothing at all, or a nickel, maybe, that you buy a candy bar with.

I couldn't say anything. I gulped. I tried to be calm, too. But I couldn't be as calm as she was, no matter how hard I tried. I didn't have the seventy-five dollars, and she had the bracelet. It makes a difference.

'Seventy-five dollars,' I said, trying to make it sound casual-like.

'Seventy-five,' she said. 'It's a beautiful bracelet . . . and of excellent quality. Of very good quality. I'm sure you would find it worth every bit of the price.'

I didn't doubt that. But that didn't help any. I had ten dollars for my present. I saved two months to get that. I thought it over quickly and I looked at the bracelet, which she still had lying across the palm of her hand. I wanted that bracelet. I wanted it for Marge, even if I had to pay seventy-five dollars and be in debt the rest of my life. I didn't care how big the debt would be, just so I could get that bracelet for Marge.

'Can it — can you buy a gift like that on the installment plan?' I asked. 'I don't think I'd like to spend that much all at once, especially this time of the year.'

'Oh, certainly. I understand. We have a very helpful credit plan. How much would you like to pay down, sir? Twenty dollars?'

'Well, I figured about ten dollars. Ten for the first installment, and' — I didn't know how I'd get it, but I said it, anyway — 'five a week.'

'I suppose that would be satisfactory. Have you a charge account here?'

'No, I don't. This is the first time I've bought here. I don't live in the city.'

She put the bracelet down on the counter, a little carelessly, — I guess salesgirls get used to nice things, — and took her slip book from the counter. It had a lot of carbons in it, so everybody could keep track of the transaction, from her on up.

'Where do you live?'

I told her.

'And your employer? You are working, I presume.'

'Yes. I work for Irish Connors.'

'What was the first name? I'm sorry, I didn't quite catch it.'

'Irish.'

'Can you spell it, please?'

'I-r-i-s-h.'

'Is that the correct name? It's slightly unusual, you know.' She smiled stiffly.

'No, that's just his nickname. But it's what everybody calls him.'

I never knew Irish by any other name. And he never told me his right name. I began to sweat and I could feel it falling down under my arms. I shifted my feet and I asked the lamp in the ceiling and the floor and the bracelet, and they didn't know Irish's name either. I tried to smile, so she'd see it was funny, really.

She smiled back, sort of a sick smile, as if she didn't see anything funny in it. The smile went away quickly. She adjusted her glasses more tightly on her nose, and sighed.

'And what kind of business does Mr. Connors have?'

'He runs a taproom. I help behind the bar.'

She took her glasses from her nose and held them tightly with her left hand.

'This is slightly — irregular,' she said. 'Will you excuse me for a moment while I take it up with our credit manager.'

She walked out from behind the counter, glanced sideways at me with a queer expression, sighed again, and started up the crowded aisle.

I stood there looking at the bracelets and seeing how much nicer Marge's was than all the other ones. It seemed a long time before she came back. When she did return, she went behind the counter without even looking at me.

'Can you give me any references, young man? That is the usual procedure, you understand.' She was fingering the bracelet again, nervously. She was wearing it out.

I thought of Johnny, but I figured she

might ask me what he did and if I said, 'Nothing — he can't get a job,' that wouldn't be much help. And Dusty wouldn't be much help, either, if I said he played the piano in our place Saturday nights for whatever gin he could get. I'd only been in the town a couple of weeks. Johnny and Dusty were the only ones I knew well enough to give as references.

'Well, I guess outside of Irish, I guess not,' I said. I kept my head lowered a bit. I didn't want to have to look at her. It made me feel very small to look at her. When I finally glanced up, she was putting all the bracelets back in their little boxes in the nice soft cushions and then into the showcase. Marge's bracelet went in last.

She was very calm about it. It was just another job, putting them back. And I'd taken a lot of her time for nothing.

'I'm sorry,' she said, without lifting her head, keeping right on working, 'but I don't think it can be arranged in this case. We'd like very much to make it convenient for you, but — I think you understand.'

'Yes,' I said. 'I realize — ' I couldn't say anything more, because I wanted that bracelet very much for Marge and I couldn't stand there and explain why I couldn't buy it. I walked away. I was glad to get back into the crowd. It made me feel a little better.

I walked around for a while, not looking at anything. Then I remembered I could have given the Lutheran minister for a reference. That would have fixed it up. A minister. That would have cinched it. I thought of going back and telling her about the Lutheran minister and then I thought she'd ask if I belonged to his church. And I didn't. I just met him once on the street and he talked to me very nice, the minister did, and asked me to stop in at his church when he found out I was new in town.

Finally I went over to the compact counter. There were nice compacts for five dollars and a salesgirl told me I could get an excellent one for ten. 'A really exquisite one,' she said.

So I spent all my ten dollars for a compact. It was a very good compact for ten dollars, no doubt about that, and the salesgirl said you couldn't get a nicer or more practical gift for a girl.

And coming home on the train, although I still wished in a way I had the bracelet, I got to liking the compact more and more

because it was such a very good compact. I patted it in my pocket every so often to see if it was still there. I got very proud of the compact because it was certainly one of the finest compacts you could get. Paying that price, you knew that. And the salesgirl said so, too. And I didn't want anything but the best for Marge.

I got very proud of the compact coming home on the train, so proud I almost forgot the bracelet.

FRANK BROOKHOUSER

Not So Comic

THERE's a new straw in the wind. It is America's million-dollar-a-month craze for comic-strip magazines. This enormous business has grown up in less than two years — in the two years since Munich. The magazines are not just reprints of the comic pages: in fact, for the most part they feature different characters and a different formula. They run to serious supernatural-scientific episodes — a sort of Jules Verne-Tarzan combination. It is true that Superman and Flash Gordon of the newspapers belong to this type, and that they in turn were fathered by that old-fashioned hero of tomorrow, Buck Rogers — passed by before he was caught up to, a has-been before he was an is. However, the superhero is rare in the newspapers, whereas he is almost half the population of the magazines.

'Ten million sales each month . . . convinced dealers everywhere . . . there's monies in the funnies. . . . That's the chant of the news trade journal. 'Poisonous mushroom growth . . . ten million . . . sex horror serials . . . every month. One million dollars are taken from . . . America's children . . . for graphic insanity.' That's the deep bellow of a big book reviewer.

Hit Comics, Weird Comics, War Comics, Planet Comics, Shadow Comics, Startling Comics, Super Comics — that's what gets Kid-brother America to put up twelve million a year: twelve million dollars in greasy small coins, warmed by dirty small palms; twelve million chivvied or cheated for, earned by sweat or by swindle.

Who ought to be worrying about all this? The marble manufacturers ought to be having board meetings; car loadings in agates must be slipping. The lead soldiers that used

to march out of Germany into our nurseries like an inanimate fifth column are as out of date now as trench warfare. The Buck Rogers *Blitzkrieg* on the printed page has put them out of business.

There's another group that should be meeting in alarm. Popeye, Orphan Annie, and Li'l Abner should unite for mutual defense against the Blue Beetle and Speed Martin. Yesterday's children may still follow the sterile romance of Li'l Abner and the antics of the arrested orphan, but in the eyes of Kid-brother America the intricate and rich personalities of these heroes of olden times have lost their appeal. Now the monotonous iron jaw of the Batman, Iron Vic, Captain Future, and Superman alone holds interest.

Still, if the marble manufacturers are holding board meetings, they have not told the press. If Hitler charts the reverses of his myrmidons of lead, DNB does not tell. If Iron Vic and Captain Future have got to Berlin, the censor has managed to keep it out of the headlines. Hearstman Popeye has fought no Arrow-collar Hercules. Spinach apparently is not going to save us. The only people who are publicly on record about this cataclysmic situation are the people interested in children's books. They are conducting a crusade in the manner of the old war against the early comic strips, but without the old conviction.

Meanwhile, the important thing is the kid brother's frantic demand for comic magazines. America's kid brother saves hard for his comic book, and, after he has read it, it becomes a sort of currency with him, to be swapped for other comic-strip magazines. Here's paper money based on something more permanent than gold.

It is a commonplace among those who have to do with children's reading that the purely imaginative story is no longer of interest. They will tell you that children are more practical now, and that they read the story of the milkman or the grocer and leave the old *Red Fairy Book* on the shelf.

That is what people say; but in truth it is only the times that have changed — the child remains the same. The kid brothers don't mind the imaginative, but they do dislike the irrelevant. The trouble with the fairy books is that they are irrelevant. Any kid can see that it takes more than a fairy godmother to get you out of trouble these days. A magic carpet may have been O. K. when horseless

carriages were a wonder, but the only way to get clear of radio and television is by rocket-ship.

What has not been seen either by the angry book reviewer or by the twenty million helpless parents is that a new age of magic is upon us. Now that war comes graphically into the living room by wired photo and by transcribed air raid, now that the record can stick among the screams of terrified other children, our children have done what man has always done when faced by a sorrow too great for understanding: they have turned to magic. Not since the Indian with his scalping knife lay outside the stockade has the grim reality of physical destruction lain so close to the protected familiar circle of childhood. The frontier is with us again, and an old instinct keeps Kid-brother America from checking his weapons outside his darkened bedroom. Nowadays a man of ten had better sleep with his ray-gun under his pillow — especially if the last broadcast is still ringing in his ears.

In the comic magazine there is some sadism, and a great deal of brutality. The themes and plots of the picture stories are completely formless. No feat of magic is out of bounds, yet the implications of limitless power are never faced. You find a bullet-proof giant putting in a lot of time and overhead straightening out a small-time love affair. This he will do in the midst of death and bloodshed, leaving mechanical monsters undisturbed if they will but gorge themselves on less conspicuous characters. The kid brothers revel in it, just as their grandfathers reveled in the gruesome details of Grimm — and just as their grandfathers' grandfathers reveled in the Old Testament.

How will the kid brothers learn concentration on such a reading diet as that? It is hardly a reading diet at all, since it is mostly a picture language. Why won't they be shell-shocked by these graphic inter-planetary wars? How are they ever to take up the quiet preoccupations of the adult?

Why also are these things so real to the kid brothers? And what will the quiet adult preoccupations of the next decade be? How do you train the nerve of a dive bomber? Old America figures on re-creating the world it remembers; young America can judge only by what it sees and hears every day, and frantically it trains itself for the war of tomorrow.

Papa, who used to be in the A. E. F., is

saying, 'Well, we'll have to do it again.' Big Brother in college, who'll have to do the doing, is demonstrating against his warlike elders. Nobody has time for the kid brothers, yet they alone are spiritually armed. *Weird Comics, Science Comics, Wonderworld Comics, Speed Comics, Hit Comics, and Crack Comics!* Let's not be too eager to take them from our children, brutal and supernatural though they may be. At least right is sure to triumph here in the end, and here alone Kid-brother America can train in security for the world of radio-roto-terror.

LOVELL THOMPSON

CITIZENSHIP: ITS PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES ¹

WE in America have been much concerned in the past with the privileges of citizenship. The future of America will depend very largely upon what the American people agree are the responsibilities of citizenship and upon the manner in which we, in the critical years ahead, discharge these responsibilities.

For several years I have earned a livelihood as a teacher of citizenship and the social studies. Yet the very things considered the most important, and upon which I have placed the greatest emphasis, now appear decidedly secondary. To exercise the right of suffrage; to understand the content and spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution; to salute the flag and sing the patriotic songs; to become informed regarding the resources and problems of the local community, are representative elements in our program of citizenship education. They are worth-while and should be retained, but they are not enough for a democracy competing in a world where the initiative rests with the political systems which require their citizens to give their all for the welfare of the fatherland.

Our attempts to instill the duty of exercising the right of suffrage have not been particularly effective. Glaring examples of corruption, which may be found in all parts of the country, have been possible because the so-called enlightened, educated, and good

citizens of the community have stayed away from the polls.

There are many things to do. There are numerous sore spots in our national life, sore spots that no longer may be left untended with impunity. Depressed areas, maladjusted groups are potential ground for fifth-column activities. Total democracy is the appropriate American antidote for totalitarianism. Fortunately America is not guilty of the 'sin of smallness.' Nevertheless, we cannot depend upon 'muddling through' to a satisfactory solution of our great domestic and international problems.

A positive program for citizenship service would mobilize the youth resources of the nation to conserve and develop the natural economy and the social health of the nation. Some could serve best by helping to conserve the natural resources much along the lines of the CCC, but with a fundamental difference in emphasis. The primary objective would be the discharge of the citizen's duty to the general welfare, rather than just to provide a place where a young person may spend a few months at public expense until more favorable employment or more favorable educational opportunities arise.

Young people intending to enter such professions as those of teaching and medicine might find they could serve best by going into the depressed areas to participate in the educational and health rehabilitation programs. The technically inclined, after a preliminary period of training, might contribute their services as technicians in some industry of importance to the national welfare.

After all, there are approximately four million young people between the ages of sixteen and twenty-four who are unemployed. A program giving this group something definite and worth-while to do and including experiences in outdoor recreation, health training, group living, and group discipline would go a long way toward conserving and developing the most important single resource the nation possesses. The health, morale, sense of duty, and background of experience of this group will largely determine the shape of things to come in this country.

Every situation tending to create unity and break down sectionalism should be looked upon with favor. Those who perform their period of service meritoriously might be rewarded with an opportunity to travel throughout the nation. By becoming ac-

¹This essay was awarded Honorable Mention in the prize contest sponsored by the *Atlantic Monthly* and the Moses Kimball Fund. The winning essay, by Roger W. Holmes, was published in the November issue of the magazine. — EDITOR

quainted with the resources and problems of the country, by getting to know the people of the various regions of the country at first hand, citizens must inevitably become more nationally-minded.

The ultimate goal for a program of citizenship would be a situation whereby any person could give a positive answer when accosted, 'How did you serve?'

The stock arguments against compulsory service — that it is an infringement of liberty, a violation of long-established custom, and un-American — do not assume great importance upon analysis. The world is passing through a revolutionary epoch. Revolutionary changes are being forced upon America, whether desired or not. During the past ten years the citizen's relation to his government has undergone a fundamental change. The citizen has been extended widespread privileges and services from the government, but has not assumed the corresponding duties which these privileges entail. It is freedom without responsibility, license rather than liberty, that the citizen now enjoys.

It is taken for granted that the government will provide the individual with an education, health services, a WPA job or home relief, and a pension in his old age. Yet there is nothing the citizen really has to do for himself or for the government. It is absurd to expect the average citizen to take a vital interest in his government when he puts nothing into it. Compulsory service would make everyone realistically citizenship-conscious.

Compulsory national service, it is said, would destroy the liberty which our forefathers prized so highly. But it was an entirely different kind of liberty that our forefathers enjoyed. I wonder if we are not a little naïve and sentimental about that liberty. My great-grandfather was a pioneer farmer, and as such was fairly representative of American life and ideals during the period in which America was predominantly an agrarian society. He did enjoy liberty, but it was a rather harsh and arbitrary kind of liberty. By long hours of hard manual labor he could hope to insure himself against privation, and by good luck with the weather and prices he might secure enough worldly goods to guarantee him moderate security and allow him to ease up a bit in his old age. He expected nothing from the government and gave nothing directly in return. He was disciplined by the harsh realities of his environ-

ment and became a citizen of courage and integrity. It was this type of American that laid the foundation out of which our present comfortable and easy civilization developed.

The theme of American life during the agrarian epoch was freedom, but the range of choice was extremely limited, the way was hard, and the penalties severe for those who lacked the stamina and the courage to make the appropriate sacrifices and adjustments.

The chief force underlying our modern industrial society is organization. Our abundance of material things rests upon mass production, which is, of course, organization carried to the highest degree. Organization is the key to national liberty. If the American people desire greater security, they must seek it through a more closely integrated, more highly organized, and less individualistic society. In such a society individuals must necessarily lose some of their former unrestricted freedom.

A program of positive citizenship would place a premium upon the intangibles of democracy, the privileges of the spirit. The most inspiring innovation in such a program is the abundant opportunity for individuals to live for something greater than themselves. The emphasis would always be away from the materialism of the past few decades toward more spiritual things. The citizen serves and makes sacrifices that his children may live in a society functioning according to the principles of justice and humanity. He serves and makes sacrifices in order to preserve a society that cherishes the right to be different — to worship according to the dictates of one's conscience, to express varying and conflicting opinions.

In this epoch of change and hour of crisis, America must prove to herself and to the world that she is worthy to hold high the cause of reason and tolerance. America will not be found wanting if we work more for the general welfare and less for ourselves, if we hold the disciplined life higher than irresponsible freedom, and place greater value upon spiritual rewards than upon material comforts.

Only by meeting the challenge to their way of life with courage, daring, and sacrifice can the American people keep faith with that great group of men and women who have already made the supreme sacrifice for the cause of democracy and humanity.

W. SEWARD SALISBURY

THE NEW ATLANTIC SERIAL

Black Lamb and Grey Falcon

BY REBECCA WEST



CHAPTERS I-VII

Black Lamb and Grey Falcon

BY REBECCA WEST

The luminous story of
the Balkan Peninsula



‘VIOLENCE was indeed all I knew of the Balkans,’ writes Rebecca West, ‘all I knew of the South Slavs. And since there proceeds steadily from the southeastern corner of Europe a stream of events which are a danger to me, which indeed for years threatened my safety and deprived me forever of many benefits, that is to say I know nothing of my own destiny. The Balkan Peninsula was only two or three days distant, yet I had never troubled to go that short journey, which might explain to me how I shall die, and why.’

So it was that in 1937 Rebecca West, with her husband, set out to explore the Balkans, and particularly Yugoslavia, to see for herself why the fate of the Continent and of England has so often been threatened by the Powderkeg of Europe. The story she brought back with her annihilates distance, and touches every thoughtful reader.

BLACK LAMB AND GREY FALCON

BY REBECCA WEST

I

I RAISED myself on my elbow and called through the open door into the other *wagon-lit*: —

‘My dear, I know I have inconvenienced you terribly by making you take your holiday now, and I know you did not really want to come to Yugoslavia at all. But when you get there you will see why it was so important that we should make this journey, and that we should make it now, at Easter. It will all be quite clear, once we are in Yugoslavia.’

There was, however, no reply. My husband had gone to sleep. It was perhaps as well. I could not have gone on to justify my certainty that this train was taking us to a land where everything was comprehensible, where the mode of life was so honest that it put an end to perplexity. I lay back in the darkness and marveled that I should be feeling about Yugoslavia as if it were my mother country, for this was 1937, and I had never seen the place till 1936. Indeed, I could remember the first time I ever spoke the name ‘Yugoslavia,’ and that was only two and a half years before, on October 9, 1934.

It was in a London nursing home. I had had an operation, in the new miraculous way. One morning a nurse had come in and given me an injection, as gently as might be, and had made a little joke which was not very good but served its purpose of taking the chill off the difficult moment. Then I picked up my book and read that sonnet by

Joachim du Bellay which begins: ‘*Heureux qui, comme Ulysse, a fait un beau voyage.*’ I said to myself, ‘That is one of the most beautiful poems in the world,’ and I rolled over in my bed, still thinking that it was one of the most beautiful poems in the world, and found that the electric light was burning and there was a new nurse standing at the end of my bed. Twelve hours had passed in that moment. They had taken me upstairs to a room far above the roofs of London, and had cut me about for three hours and a half, and had brought me down again, and now I was merely sleepy, and not at all sick, and still half-rooted in my pleasure in the poem, still listening to a voice speaking through the ages, with barest economy that somehow is the most lavish melody: ‘*Et en quelle saison Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison, Qui m’est une province et beaucoup d’avantage?*’

I had been told beforehand that it would all be quite easy, but before an operation the unconscious, which is really a shocking old fool, envisages surgery as it was in the Stone Age, and I had been very much afraid. I rebuked myself for not having observed that the universe was becoming beneficent at a great rate. But it was not yet wholly so. My operation wound left me an illusion that I had a load of ice strapped to my body. So, to distract me, I had a radio brought into my room, and for the first time I realized how uninteresting life could be and how perverse human appe-

tite. After I had listened to some talks and variety programs I should not have been surprised to hear that there are householders who make arrangements with the local authorities not to empty their dustbins but to fill them. Nevertheless, there was always good music provided by some station or other at any time in the day, and I learned to swing like a trapeze artist from program to program in search of it.

But one evening I turned the wrong knob and found music of a kind other than I sought, the music that is above earth, that lives in the thunderclouds and rolls in human ears and sometimes deafens them without betraying the path of its melodic line. I heard the announcer relate how the King of Yugoslavia had been assassinated in the streets of Marseille that morning. We had passed into another phase of the mystery we are enacting here on earth, and I knew that it might be agonizing. The rags and tags of knowledge that we all have about us told me what foreign power had done this thing. It appeared to me inevitable that war must follow, and indeed it must have done, had not the Yugoslavian Government exercised an iron control on its population, then and thereafter, and abstained from the smallest provocative action against its enemies. That forbearance, which is one of the most extraordinary feats of statesmanship performed in post-war Europe, I could not be expected to foresee. So I rang for my nurse, and when she came I cried to her, 'Switch on the telephone. I must speak to my husband at once. A most terrible thing has happened. The King of Yugoslavia has been assassinated.' 'Oh, dear!' she replied. 'Did you know him?' 'No,' I said. 'Then why,' she asked, 'do you think it's so terrible?'

I said, 'Well, you know, assassinations lead to other things.' 'Do they?' she asked. 'Do they not!' I sighed, for when I came to look back on it my life has been punctuated by the slaughter of royalties, by the shouting of newsboys

who have run down the streets to tell me that someone has used a lethal weapon to turn over a new leaf in the book of history. I remember, when I was five years old, looking upward at my mother and her cousin, who were standing side by side and looking down at a newspaper laid on a table in a circle of gaslight, the folds in their white pouched blouses and long black skirts kept as still by their consternation as if they were carved in stone.

'There was the Empress Elizabeth of Austria,' I said to the nurse thirty-six years later. 'She was very beautiful, wasn't she?' she asked. 'One of the most beautiful women who ever lived,' I said. 'But wasn't she mad?' she asked. 'Perhaps,' I said, 'perhaps, but only a little, and at the end. She was certainly brilliantly clever. Before she was thirty she had given proof of greatness.' 'How?' she asked. To her increasing distress I told her, for I know quite a lot of Hapsburg history, until I saw how bored she was and let her go and leave me in darkness that was now patterned by the lovely triangle of Elizabeth's face.

How great she was! In her early pictures she wears the same look of fiery sullenness we see in the young Napoleon; she knows that within her there is a spring of life, and she is afraid that the world will not let it flow forth and do its fructifying work. In her later pictures she wears a look that was never on the face of Napoleon. The world had not let the spring flow forth, and it had turned to bitterness. But she was not without achievements of the finest sort — of a sort, indeed, that Napoleon never equaled. When she was sixteen she came, a Wittelsbach from the country-bumpkin court of Munich, to marry the young Emperor of Austria and be the governing prisoner of the court of Vienna, which was the court of courts since the French Revolution had annulled the Tuileries and Versailles. The change would have made many women into nothing. But five years later she made a tour of Lom-

bardy and Venetia at Franz Josef's side which was in many ways a miracle. It was, in the first place, a miracle of courage, because he and his officials had made these provinces loathe them for their brutality and inefficiency. The young girl sat with unbowed head in theatres that became silent as the grave at her coming, that were black with mourning worn to insult her, and she walked unperturbed through streets that emptied before her as if she were the plague. But when she came face to face with any Italians there came to her always the right word and gesture by which she uncovered her nature and pleaded, 'Look, I am the Empress, but I am not evil; forgive me and my husband and Austria for the evil we have done you, and let us love one another and work for peace between us.'

It was useless, of course. Her successes were immediately annulled by the arrests and floggings carried out by the Hapsburg officials. It was inevitable that the two provinces should be absorbed in the new Kingdom of Italy. But Elizabeth's sweetness had not been merely automatic; she had been thinking like a Liberal and like an Empress. She knew there was a real link between Austria and Hungary, and that it was being strained by misgovernment. So the next year she made a journey through Hungary, which was also a matter of courage, for it was almost as gravely disaffected as Lombardy and Venetia; and afterwards she learned Hungarian, though it is one of the most difficult of languages, cultivated the friendship of many important Hungarians, and acquainted herself with the nature of the concessions desired by Hungary. Her plans fell into abeyance when she parted from Franz Josef and traveled for five years. But in 1866 Austria was defeated by the Prussians, and she came back to console her husband, and then she induced him to create the Dual Monarchy and give autonomy to Hungary. It was by this device alone that the Austro-

Hungarian Empire was able to survive into the twentieth century, and both the idea and the driving force behind the execution belonged to Elizabeth. That was statesmanship. Nothing of Napoleon's making lasted so long, or was made so nobly.

II

Elizabeth should have gone on and medicined some of the other sores that were poisoning the Empire. She should have solved the problem of the Slav populations under Hapsburg rule. The Slavs were a people quarrelsome, courageous, artistic, intellectual, and profoundly perplexing to all other peoples; they came from Asia into the Balkan Peninsula and were Christianized by the Byzantine influence. Thereafter they founded violent and magnificent kingdoms of infinite promise in Bulgaria, Serbia, and Bosnia, but these were overthrown when the Turks invaded Europe in the fourteenth century, and all were enslaved except the Slavs on the western borders of the Peninsula. These lived under the wing of the great powers, of Venice and Austria and Hungary, which was a doubtful privilege, since they were used as helots and as man power to be employed without thrift against the Turks.

Now all of these were under the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the Czechs and the Croats, and the Slovenes and the Slovaks and the Dalmatians; and they were alike treated oppressively, largely because the German-Austrians felt a violent instinctive loathing of all Slavs and particularly of the Czechs, whose great intelligence and ability made them dangerous competitors in the labor market. Moreover, Serbia and Bulgaria had thrown off the Turkish yoke during the nineteenth century and had established themselves as free states, and the reactionary parties in Austria and Hungary feared that if their Slav populations were given liberty they would seek union with Serbia under Russian protection. There-

fore they harried the Slavs as much as they could, by all possible economic and social penalties, and tried with especial venom to destroy their languages, and created for themselves an increasing amount of internal disorder that all sane men saw carried a threat of disruption. It might have saved the Empire altogether, it might have averted the war of 1914, if Elizabeth had dealt with the Slavs as she dealt with the Hungarians. But after thirty she did no more work for the Empire.

Her work stopped because her marriage, which was the medium for her work, ceased to be tolerable. It appears probable, from the evidence we have, that Elizabeth could not reconcile herself to a certain paradox which often appears in the lives of very feminine women. She knew that certain virtues are understood to be desirable in women: beauty, tenderness, grace, house pride, the power to bear and rear children. She believed that she possessed some of these virtues and that her husband loved her for it. Indeed he seemed to have given definite proof that he loved her by marrying her against the will of his mother, the Archduchess Sophia. And Elizabeth thought that because he loved her he must be her friend. In that she was artless. Her husband, like many other human beings, was divided between the love of life and the love of death. His love of life made him love Elizabeth. His love of death made him love his abominable mother, and give her an authority over Elizabeth which she horribly misused.

The Archduchess Sophia is a figure of universal significance. She was the kind of woman whom men respect for no other reason than that she is lethal, whom a male committee will appoint to the post of hospital matron. She had none of the womanly virtues. Especially did she lack tenderness. There is no record of her ever having said a gentle word to the girl of sixteen whom her son brought home to endure this troublesome great-

ness, and she arranged for the Archbishop who performed their marriage ceremony to address an insulting homily to the bride, bidding her remember that she was a nobody who had been called to a great position, and try to do her best. In politics she was practised in every kind of folly that most affronted the girl's instinctive wisdom. She was always thrusting the blunt muzzle of her stupidity into conclaves of state, treading down intelligent debate as a beast treads down the grass at a gate into mud, undermining the foundations of the Empire by insisting that everybody possible should be opposed and hurt. She was personally responsible for some very ugly persecutions: one of her victims was the peasant philosopher Konrad Deubler. She was also a great slut. She had done nothing to reform the mediævalism of the Austrian Palaces; and she saw to it that the evil she did should live after her by snatching Elizabeth's children away from her and allowing the Empress no part in their upbringing. One little girl died in her care, attended by a doctor whom Elizabeth thought old-fashioned and incompetent; and the unhappy character of the Crown Prince Rudolf, restless, undisciplined, tactless, and insatiable, bears witness to her ability to look after their minds.

After Franz Josef had lost Elizabeth by putting this inferior over her and proving that love is not necessarily kind, he showed her endless kindness and indulgence, financing her wanderings and her castle-buildings with great good temper and receiving her gladly when she came home; and it seems she had no ill-feeling against him. She introduced the actress, Katherina Schratt, into his life very much as a woman might put flowers into a room she felt to be dreary. But she must have hated him as the Hapsburg of Hapsburgs, the centre of the imbecile system, when on January 30, 1889, Rudolf was found dead in his shooting box at Mayerling beside the

body of a girl of seventeen named Marie Vetsera. This event still remains a mystery. Marie Vetsera had been his mistress for a year, and it is usually supposed that he and she had agreed to die together because Franz Josef had demanded they should part. But this is very hard to believe. Marie Vetsera was a very fat and plain little girl, bouncing with a vulgar ardor stimulated by improper French novels, which had already led her into an affair with an English officer in Egypt; and it seems unlikely that Rudolf, who was a man of many love affairs, should have thought her of supreme value after a year's possession, particularly considering that he had spent the night before he went to Mayerling with an actress to whom he had long been attached. It would seem much more probable that he had taken his life or (which is possible if his farewell notes were forged) been murdered as a result of troubles arising from his political opinions.

Of these we know a great deal, because he wrote a great number of articles for anonymous publication in the *Neues Wiener Tageblatt* and an even greater number of letters to its editor, a gifted Jew named Moritz-Szepe. These show that he was a fervent Liberal and loathed the Hapsburg system. He also loathed the expanding militarism of Germany, and prophesied that a German alliance would mean the destruction of Austria, body and soul; and he revered France, with its deeply rooted culture and democratic tradition. He was enraged by anti-Semitism and wrote one of his most forcible articles against a gang of aristocrats who after a drunken orgy had gone round the Ghetto of Prague smashing windows, and had been let off scot-free by the police. He was scandalized by the corruption of the banks and law courts, and by the lack of integrity among high officials and politicians, and most of all by the Austro-Hungarian Empire. 'As a simple onlooker,' he wrote, 'I am curious to know how such

an old and tough organism as the Austrian Empire can last so long without cracking at the joints and breaking into pieces.'

Particularly was he eager to deal with the Slav problem, which had now grown even more complicated. Bosnia and Herzegovina had driven out the Turks and had been cheated out of the freedom they had fairly won by the Treaty of Berlin, which had given the Austro-Hungarian Empire the right to occupy and administer them. This had enraged the Slavs and given Serbia a grievance, so it was held by reactionaries to be all the more necessary to defend Austrian and Hungarian privileges. Rudolf had shown what he felt early in his career: when Franz Josef had appointed him colonel he had chosen to be attached to a Czech regiment with middle-class officers which was then stationed in Prague.

Whatever the explanation of Mayerling, it must have raised Elizabeth's impatience with Vienna to loathing. The situation was unmitigated waste and ruin. She had never achieved a happy relationship with her son, although there was a strong intellectual sympathy between them, because of the early alienating influence of the Archduchess Sophia; and the Hapsburgs had spoiled what they had not let her save. Rudolf had been forced for dynastic reasons into a marriage with a tedious Belgian princess, an acidulated child with golden hair, small eyes, and the conservative opinions one would expect from a very old man at the Metropolitan Carlton Club. She was literally a child; at the time of her wedding she had not yet shown the signs of womanhood. Owing to a slip in the enormously complicated domestic machinery of the Hapsburgs, she and her young bridegroom, who was only twenty-two, had been sent for their honeymoon to a remote castle which had been left servantless and unprepared. This ill-begun marriage had gone from bad to worse, and both husband and wife tortured and were tortured in turn.

But it was the Hapsburg situation, not merely the specific wrongs the Hapsburgs brought on Rudolf, that were his ruin. Chamberlains fussed, spies scribbled, the police bullied and nagged, everybody knew where everybody else was at every moment of the day, Franz Josef rose at four each morning and worked on official papers for twelve or fourteen hours; and not a minute's thought was given to correcting the evils that were undermining the foundations of the Empire. Rudolf, as any intelligent member of the family must have done, tried to remedy this. Either he made some too ambitious plan and was detected, and killed himself or was killed, or from discouragement he soused himself with brandy till it seemed proper to die for a plump little hoyden of sixteen. Now he lay dead, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire was without a direct or satisfactory heir.

Elizabeth lived nine years after her son's death, as drearily as any other of the unemployed. Then, perhaps as a punishment for having turned her back on the Slav problem, the key to Eastern Europe, a Western problem slew her. For the newspaper my mother and her cousin spread in the gaslight was wrong when it said that the man who killed her, Lucheni, was a madman. It is true that he said that he had killed Elizabeth because he had vowed to kill the first royal person he could find, and that he had gone to Évian to stab the Duke of Orleans but had missed him and had come back to Geneva to get Elizabeth instead; and this is an insane avowal, for no benefit whatsoever could be derived by anybody from the death of either of these people. But, for all that, Lucheni was not mad. Many people are unable to say what they mean only because they have not been given an adequate vocabulary by their environment; and their apparently meaningless remarks may be inspired by a sane enough consciousness of real facts.

Lucheni performed his meaningless act out of his consciousness of what is per-

haps the most real distress of our age. He was an Italian born in Paris of parents forced by their poverty to emigrate and trodden down into an alien criminal class: that is to say, he belonged to an urban population for which the existing forms of government made no provision, which wandered often workless and always traditionless, without power to control its destiny. It was indeed most appropriate that he should register his discontent by killing Elizabeth, for Vienna is the archetype of the great city which breeds such a population. Its luxury was financed by an exploited peasant class bled so white that it was ready to send its boys into the factories and the girls into service on any terms. The beggars in the streets of Vienna, which the innocent suppose were put there by the Treaty of Trianon, are descendants of an army as old as the nineteenth century. Lucheni said with his stiletto to the symbol of power, 'Hey, what are you going to do with me?' He made no suggestions, but cannot be blamed for it. It was the essence of his case against society that it had left him unfit to offer suggestions, unable to form thoughts or design actions other than the crudest and most violent. He lived many years in prison, almost until his like had found a vocabulary and a name for themselves and had astonished the world with the farce of Fascism.

So Elizabeth died, with a terrible ease. All her life her corsets had deformed and impeded her beautiful body, but they did not protect her from the assassin's stiletto. That cut clean through to her heart.

After that, Austria became a quiet place in Western eyes. Proust has pointed out that if one goes on performing any action, however banal, long enough, it automatically becomes 'wonderful': a simple walk down a hundred yards of village street is 'wonderful' if it is made every Sunday by an old lady of ninety. Franz Josef had for so long risen from his camp bed at four o'clock in the

morning and worked twelve or fourteen hours on his official papers that he was recognized as one of the most 'wonderful' of sovereigns, almost as 'wonderful' as Queen Victoria, though he had shown no signs of losing in age the obstinacy and lack of imagination that made him see it as his duty to preserve his court as a morgue of etiquette and his Empire as a topheavy anachronism. He was certain of universal acclamation not only during his life but after his death, for it is the habit of the people, whenever an old man mismanages his business so that it falls to pieces as soon as he dies, to say, 'Ah, So-and-so was wonderful! He kept things together so long as he was alive, and look what happens now he has gone!'

It was true that there was already shaping in his court a disaster that was to consume us all; but this did not appear to English eyes, largely because Austria was visited before the war only by our upper classes, who in no country noticed anything but horses, and Austrian horses were good.

III

The next time the red light of violence shone out it seemed of no importance, an irrelevant horror. When I was ten years old, on June 11, 1903, Alexander Obrenovich, King of Serbia, and his wife Draga were murdered in the Palace at Belgrade, and their naked bodies thrown out of their bedroom into the garden. The Queen's two brothers and two Ministers were also killed. It was the work of a number of army officers, none of whom was then known outside Serbia, and the main characters were not interesting. Alexander was a flabby young man with pince-nez who had a taste for clumsy experiments in absolutism, and his wife — who strangely enough belonged to the same type as Marie Vetsera, though she had in her youth been far more beautiful — was understood to have the disadvantages of being disreputable, possessing an ambitious family, and lying

under the suspicion of trying to palm off a borrowed baby as an heir to the throne.

There can be no question that these people were regarded with terrified apprehension by the Serbians, who had freed themselves from the Turk not a hundred years before and knew that their independence was perpetually threatened by the great powers. It lingered in the mind only because of its nightmare touches. The conspirators blew open the door of the palace with a dynamite cartridge which fused the electric lights, and they stumbled about blaspheming in the darkness, passing into a frenzy of cruelty that was half terror. The King and Queen hid in a secret cupboard in their bedroom for two hours, listening to the searchers grow cold, then warm, then cold again, then warm, and at last hot, and burning hot. The weakling King was hard to kill: when they threw him from the balcony they thought him doubly dead from bullet wounds and sword slashes, but the fingers of his right hand clasped the railing and had to be cut off before he fell to the ground, where the fingers of his left hand clutched the grass. Though it was June, rain fell on the naked bodies in the early morning as they lay among the flowers. The whole of Europe was revolted. Edward VII withdrew his Minister, and most of the great powers followed his example.

That murder was just a half-tone square, dimly figured with horror, at the back of my mind: a Police News poster or the front page of a tabloid, seen years ago. But now I realize that when Alexander and Draga fell from that balcony the whole of the modern world fell with them. It took some time to reach the ground and break its neck, but its fall started then. For this is not a strictly moral universe, and it is not true that it is useless to kill a tyrant because a worse man takes his place. It has never been more effectively disproved than by the successor of Alexander Obrenovitch.

Peter Karageorgevich came to the throne under every possible disadvantage. He was close on sixty and had never seen Serbia since he left it with his exiled father at the age of fourteen; he had been brought up at Geneva under the influence of Swiss liberalism and had later become an officer in the French army; he had no experience of statecraft, and he was a man of modest and retiring personality and simple manners.

But Peter Karageorgevich was a great king. Slowly and soberly he proved himself one of the finest liberal statesmen in Europe, and later, in the Balkan Wars which drove the Turk out of Macedonia and Old Serbia, he proved himself a magnificent soldier. Never was there worse luck for Europe. Austria, with far more territory than she could properly administer, wanted more and had formed her *Drang nach Osten*, her 'Hasten to the East' policy. Now the formidable new military state of Serbia was in her way, and might even join with Russia to attack her. Now, too, all the Slav peoples of the Empire were seething with discontent because the free Serbians were doing so well, and the German-Austrians hated them more than ever. The situation had been further complicated since Rudolf's day because the Empire had affronted Slav feeling by giving up the pretense that Bosnia and Herzegovina were provinces which it merely occupied and administered, and formally annexing them. This made many Slavs address appeals to Serbia, and she, as was natural in a young country, sometimes answered boastfully.

The situation was further complicated by the character of the man who had succeeded Rudolf as the heir to the Imperial Crown, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand. This unlovable melancholic had upset all sections of the people by his proposals, drafted and expressed without the slightest trace of statesmanship, to make a tripartite monarchy of the Empire, by forming the Slavs into a separate kingdom. The reactionaries felt

this was merely an expression of his bitter hostility towards the Emperor and his conservatism; the Slavs were unimpressed, and declared they would rather be free like Serbia. The Austrian Chief of General Staff, Conrad von Hötzendorf, was speaking for many of his countrymen and most of his class when he ceaselessly urged that a preventive war should be waged against Serbia before she got too strong. None of these things would have happened if Alexander Obrenovich had not been murdered and given place to a better man.

Then, on June 28, 1914, the Austro-Hungarian Government allowed Franz Ferdinand to go to Bosnia in his capacity of Inspector-General of the Army to conduct manœuvres on the Serbian frontier. It was strange that he should wish to do this, and that they should allow him, for it was St. Vitus's Day, the anniversary of the Battle of Kossovo in 1389, the defeat of the Serb provinces by the Turks which meant five hundred years of enslavement. That defeat had been wiped out in the Balkan War by the recapture of Kossovo, and it was not tactful to remind the Serbs that some of their people were still enslaved by a foreign power. But Franz Ferdinand had his wish and then paid a visit to Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, where the police gave him quite insufficient protection, though they had been warned that attempts were to be made on his life. A Bosnian Serb named Princip, who deeply resented Austro-Hungarian misrule, was able without any difficulty to shoot him as he drove along the street, and accidentally killed his wife as well. The Austro-Hungarian Empire used this as a pretext to declare war on Serbia. Other powers took sides, and the Great War started.

IV

So, that evening in 1934, I lay in bed and looked at my radio fearfully, though it had nothing more to say that was relevant, and later, on the telephone,

talked to my husband as one does in times of crisis if one is happily married, asking him questions which one knows quite well neither he nor anyone else can answer and deriving great comfort from what he says. I was really frightened, for all these earlier killings had either hastened doom towards me or prefigured it. If Rudolf had not died, he might have solved the Slav problem of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and restrained its imperialist ambition, and there might have been no war. If Alexander Obrenovich had not been killed, Serbia might never have been strong enough to excite the Empire's jealousy and fear, and there might have been no war. The killing of Franz Ferdinand was war itself. And the death of Elizabeth had shown me the scourge of the world after the war — Lucheni, Fascism, the rule of the dispossessed class that claims its rights and cannot conceive them save in terms of empty violence, of killing, taking, suppressing.

And now there was another killing. Again it was in the southeast of Europe, where was the source of all the other deaths. That seemed to me strange, in 1934, because the Slav problem then seemed to have been satisfactorily settled by the war. The Czechs and the Slovaks had their pleasant democratic state, which was working well enough except for the complaints of the Sudeten Germans, who under the Hapsburgs had been pampered with privileges paid for by their Slav neighbors. The Slovenes and the Croats and the Dalmatians and the Montenegrins were now united in the kingdom of the South Slavs, which is what 'Yugoslavia' means; and though the Slovenes and Croats and Dalmatians were separated in spirit from the Serbs by their Catholicism, and the Montenegrins hankered after their lost independence, the State had seemed to be finding its balance. But here was another murder, another threat that man was going to deliver himself up to pain, was going to serve death instead of life.

A few days later my husband told me that he had seen a news film which had shown with extraordinary detail the actual death of the King of Yugoslavia, and as soon as I could leave the nursing home I went and saw it. I had to go to a private projection room, for by that time it had been withdrawn from the ordinary cinemas, and I took the opportunity to have it run over several times, while I peered at it like an old woman reading the tea leaves in her cup. First there was the Yugoslavian warship sliding into the harbor of Marseille, which I know very well. Behind it was that vast suspension bridge which always troubles me because it reminds me that in this mechanized age I am as little unable to understand my environment as any primitive woman who thinks that a waterfall is inhabited by a spirit, and indeed less so, for her opinion might, from a poetical point of view, be correct. I know enough to be aware that this bridge cannot have been spun by a vast steel spider out of its entrails, but no other explanation seems to me as plausible, and I have not the faintest notion of its use. But the man who comes down the gangway of the ship and travels on the tender to the quay, him I can understand, for he is something that is not new. Always the people have had the idea of the leader, and sometimes a man is born who embodies this idea.

His face is sucked too close to the bone by sickness to be tranquil or even handsome, and it would at any time have suggested a dry pedantry, unnatural in a man not far advanced in the forties. But he looks like a great man, which is not to say that he is a good man or a wise man, but that he has that historic quality which comes from intense concentration on an important subject. What he is thinking of is noble, to judge from the homage he pays it with his eyes, and it governs him entirely. He does not relapse into it when the other world fails to interest him; rather does he relapse into noticing what is about

him when for a moment his interior communion fails him. But he is not abstracted; he is paying due respect to the meeting between France and Yugoslavia. Indeed he is bringing to the official occasion a naïve earnestness. When Monsieur Barthou, the French Foreign Minister, comes and greets him, it is as if a jolly priest, fully at ease in his orders, stood before the altar beside a tortured mystical layman. Sometimes, too, he shows by a turn of the head, by a dilation of the pinched nostrils, that some delightful aspect of the scene has pleased him.

About all his reactions there is that jerky quickness which comes of long vigilance. It was natural. He had been a soldier from boyhood, and since the Great War he had perpetually been threatened with death from within, by tuberculosis, and with death from without, by assassination at the hand of Croats or Macedonians who wanted independence instead of union with Serbia. But it is not fear that is his preoccupation. That, certainly, is Yugoslavia.

Now King Alexander is driving down the familiar streets, curiously unguarded, in a curiously antique car. It can be seen from his attempt to make his stiff hand supple, from a careless flash of his careful black eyes, that he is taking the cheers of the crowd with a childish seriousness; it is touching, like a girl's putting full faith in the compliments that are paid to her at a ball. Then his preoccupation veils his brows. He is thinking of Yugoslavia again. Then the camera leaves him. It recedes. The sound track records a change, a swelling astonishment, in the voice of the crowd. We see a man jumping on the footboard of the car, a gendarme swinging a sword, a revolver in the hand of another, a straw hat lying on the ground, a crowd that jumps up and down, up and down, smashing something flat with its arms, kicking something flat with its feet, till there is seen on the pavement a pulp covered with garments. A lad in a

sweater dodges before his captors, his defiant face unmarked by fear, although his body expresses the very last extreme of fear by a creeping, writhing motion. A view of the whole street shows people dashed about as by a tangible wind of death.

The camera returns to the car and we see the King. He is lying almost flat on his back on the seat, and he is as I was after the anæsthetic. He does not know that anything has happened; he is still half-rooted in the pleasure of his own nostalgia. He might be asking, '*Et en quelle saison Revoiray-je le clos de ma pauvre maison, Qui m'est une province et beaucoup d'avantage?*' It is certain that he is dying, because he is the centre of a miraculous manifestation which would not happen unless the living had been shocked out of their reserve by the presence of death. Innumerable hands are caressing him. Hands are coming from everywhere, over the back of the car, over the sides, through the windows, to caress the dying King, and they are supremely kind. They are far kinder than faces can be, for faces are Marthas burdened with many cares because of their close connection with the mind, but these hands express the mindless sympathy of living flesh for flesh that is about to die, the pure physical basis for pity. They are men's hands, but they move tenderly as the hands of women fondling their babies; they stroke his cheek as if they were washing it with kindness. Suddenly his nostalgia goes from him. His pedantry relaxes. He is at peace; he need not guard against death any more.

I could not understand this event, no matter how often I saw this picture. I knew, of course, how and why the murder had happened. Lucheni has got on well in the world. When he killed Elizabeth over forty years ago, he had to do his own work in the world; he had to travel humbly about Switzerland in search of his victims; he had but one little two-edged dagger as tool for his

crime, and he had to pay the penalty. But now Lucheni is Mussolini, and the improvement in his circumstances can be measured by the increase in the magnitude of his crime. In Elizabeth the insecure and traditionless town dweller struck down the symbol of power, but the modern representative has struck down power itself and degraded its essence. His offense is not that he has virtually deposed his king, for kings and presidents who cannot hold their office lose thereby the title to their kingdoms and republics. His offense is that he made himself dictator without binding himself by any of the contractual obligations which civilized man has imposed on his rulers in all creditable phases of history and which give power a soul to be saved. This cancellation of process in government leaves it an empty violence that must perpetually and at any cost outdo itself, for it has no alternative idea and hence no alternative activity. This aggressiveness leads obviously to the establishment of immense armed forces, and furtively to incessant experimentation with methods of injuring the outer world other than the traditional procedure of warfare.

Violence was, indeed, all I knew of the Balkans — all I knew of the South Slavs. I derived the knowledge from memories of my earliest interest in liberalism, of leaves fallen from this jungle, of pamphlets tied up with string, in the dustiest corners of junkshops, and later from the prejudices of the French, who use the word *Balkan* as a term of abuse, meaning a *rastaquouère* type of barbarian. In Paris, awakened in a hotel bedroom by the insufficiently private life of my neighbors, I have heard the sound of three slashing slaps and a woman's voice crying through sobs, '*Balkan! Balkan!*' In Nice, as I sat eating *langouste* outside a little restaurant down by the harbor, there were some shots, a sailor lurched out of the next-door bar, and the proprietress ran after him, shouting, '*Balkan! Balkan!*' He had emptied his revolver

into the mirror behind the bar. And now I was faced with the immense nobility of the King in the film, who was certainly *Balkan, Balkan*, but who met violence with an imaginative realization which is its very opposite, which absorbs it into the experience it aims at destroying.

But I must have been wholly mistaken in my acceptance of the popular legend regarding the Balkans, for if the South Slavs had been truly violent they would not have been hated first by the Austrians, who worshiped violence in an imperialist form, and later by the Fascists, who worship violence in a totalitarian form. Yet it was impossible to think of the Balkans for one moment as gentle and lamblike, for assuredly Alexander and Draga Obrenovich and Franz Ferdinand and his wife had none of them died in their beds. I had to admit that I quite simply and flatly knew nothing at all about the southeastern corner of Europe; and since there proceeds steadily from that place a stream of events which are a source of danger to me, which indeed for four years threatened my safety and during that time deprived me forever of many benefits, that is to say I know nothing of my own destiny.

That is a calamity. Pascal wrote: 'Man is but a reed, the most feeble thing in nature; but he is a thinking reed. The entire universe need not arm itself to crush him. A vapor, a drop of water, suffices to kill him. But if the universe were to crush him, man would still be more noble than that which killed him, because he knows that he dies and the advantage which the universe has over him; the universe knows nothing of this.'

In these words he writes the sole prescription for a distinguished humanity. We must learn to know the nature of the advantage which the universe has over us, which in my case seems to lie in the Balkan Peninsula. It was only two or three days distant, yet I had

never troubled to go that short journey which might explain to me how I shall die, and why. While I was marveling at my inertia, I was asked to go to Yugoslavia to give some lectures in different towns before universities and English Clubs, and this I did in the spring of 1936.

V

We spent the night at Salzburg, and in the morning we had time to visit the house where Mozart was born, and look at his little spinet, which has keys that are brown and white instead of white and black. There the boy sat, pleased by its prettiness and pleased by the sounds he drew from it, while there encircled him the rage of his father at this tiresome, weak, philandering son he had begotten, who could make no proper use of his gifts; and further back still the indifference of his contemporaries, which was to kill him; and further back still, so far away as to be of no use to him, our impotent love for him. That was something we humans did not do very well.

Then we went down to the railway station and waited some hours for the train to Zagreb, the capital of Croatia. When it at last arrived, I found myself in the midst of what is to me the mystery of mysteries. For it had left Berlin the night before and was crammed with unhappy-looking German tourists, all taking advantage of the pact by which they could take a substantial sum out of the country provided they were going to Yugoslavia; and I cannot understand the proceedings of Germans. All Central Europe seems to me to be enacting a fantasy which I cannot interpret.

The carriages were so crowded that we could only find one free seat in a first-class compartment, which I took, while my husband sat down in a seat which a young man had just left to go to the restaurant car for lunch. The other people in the compartment were an elderly business man and his wife, both well on

in the fifties, and a manufacturer and his wife, socially superior to the others and fifteen to twenty years younger. The business man's wife kept leaving her seat and running up and down the corridor in a state of great distress, lamenting that she and her husband had no Austrian schillings and therefore could not get a meal in the restaurant car. Her distress was so marked that we assumed they had eaten nothing for many hours, and we gave her a packet of chocolate and some biscuits, which she ate very quickly with an abstracted air.

Between mouthfuls she explained that they were traveling to a Dalmatian island because her husband had been very ill with a nervous disorder affecting the stomach which made him unable to take decisions. She pointed a bitten bar of chocolate at him and said, 'Yes, he can't make up his mind about anything! If you say, "Do you want to go or do you want to stay?" he doesn't know.' Grieving and faithful love shone in her eyes.

My husband was very sympathetic, and said he had had nervous trouble of some sort. He even alleged, to my surprise, that he had passed through a similar period of not knowing his own mind. Sunshine, he said, he had found the only cure.

At Villach the business man's wife was overjoyed to find she could buy some sausages for herself and her husband. All through the journey she was eating voraciously, running after food down the corridor, coming back munching something, her mouth and bust powdered with crumbs. But there was nothing so voluptuous as greed about all this eating. She was simply stoking herself with food to keep her nerves going, as ill and tired people drink. Actually she was an extremely pleasant and appealing person: she was all goodness and kindness, and she loved her husband very much. She took great pleasure in bringing him all this food, and she liked pointing out to him anything beautiful that we were

passing. When she had got him to give his attention to it, she looked no more at the beautiful thing but only at his face.

When we were going by the very beautiful Wörther See, which lay under the hills, veiled by their shadows and the dusk so that one could attribute to it just the kind of beauty one prefers, she made him look at it, looked at him looking at it, and then turned to us and said, 'You cannot think what troubles he has had!'

We made sympathetic noises, and the business man began to grumble away at his ease. It appeared that he owned an apartment house in Berlin, and had for six months been struggling with a wholly unforeseen and inexplicable demand for extra taxes on it. He did not allege that the tax was unjust. He seemed to think that the demand was legal enough, but that the relevant law was so complicated, and was so capriciously interpreted by the Nazi courts, that he had been unable to foresee how much he would be asked for, and was still quite at a loss to calculate what might be exacted in the future. He had also had a great deal of trouble dealing with some undesirable tenants, whose conduct had caused frequent complaints from other tenants, but who were members of the Nazi Party. He left it ambiguous whether he had tried to evict the undesirable tenants and had been foiled by the Nazis, or if he had been too frightened even to try to get redress.

At that the manufacturer and his wife sighed, and said that they could understand. The man spoke with a great deal of reticence and obviously did not want to give away exactly what his business was, lest he should get into difficulties; but he said with great resentment that the Nazis had put a director into his company who knew nothing and was simply a Party man in line for a job. He added, however, that what he really minded was the unforeseeable taxes. He laughed at the absurdity of it all, for he was a

brave and jolly man; but the mere fact that he stopped giving us details of his worries, when he was obviously extremely expansive by temperament, showed that his spirit was deeply troubled. Soon he fell silent and put his arm round his wife. The two had an air of being united by a great passion, an unusual physical sympathy, and also by a common endurance of stress and strain, to a degree which would have seemed more natural in far older people.

To cheer him up the wife told us funny stories about some consequences of Hitlerismus. She described how the hairdresser's assistant who had always waved her hair for her had one morning greeted her with tears, and told her that she was afraid she would never be able to attend to her again, because she was afraid she had failed in the examination which she had to pass for the right to practise her craft.

She had said to the girl, 'I am sure you will pass your examination, for you are so very good at your work.' But the girl had answered, 'Yes, I am good at my work! Shampooing can I do, and water-waving can I do, and marcelling can I do, and oil massage can I do, and hair dyeing can I do, but keep from mixing up Göring's and Goebbels's birthday, that can I not do.'

They all laughed at this, and then again fell silent.

The business man said, 'But all the young people, they are solid for Hitler. For them all is done.'

The others said, 'Ach, so!' and the business man's wife began, 'Yes, our sons,' and then stopped.

They were all of them falling to pieces under the emotional and intellectual strain laid on them by their government, poor Laocoöns strangled by red tape. It was obvious that by getting the population into this state the Nazis had guaranteed the continuance of their system; for none of these people could have given any effective support to any rival party that wanted to seize power; and indeed

their affairs, which were certainly typical, were in such an inextricable state of confusion that no sane party would now wish to take over the government, since it would certainly see nothing but failure ahead. Their misery seemed to have abolished every possible future for them.

It was dark when we crossed the Yugoslavian frontier. Handsome young soldiers in olive uniforms, with faces sealed by the flatness of cheekbones, asked us questions softly, insistently, without interest. As we steamed out of the station, the manufacturer said with a rolling laugh, 'Well, we'll have no more good food till we're back here again. The food in Yugoslavia is terrible.' 'Ach, so we have heard,' wailed the business man's wife, 'and what shall I do with my poor man! There is nothing good at all, is there?'

This seemed to me extremely funny, for the food of the Yugoslavs has a Slav superbness. They cook lamb and sucking pig as well as anywhere in the world, have a lot of fresh-water fish and broil it straight out of the streams, use their vegetables young enough, have many dark and rich romantic soups, and understand that seasoning should be pungent rather than hot.

I said, 'You needn't worry at all. Yugoslavian food is very good.' The manufacturer laughed and shook his head. 'No, I was there in the war and it was terrible.' 'Perhaps it was at that time,' I said, 'but I was there last year, and I found it admirable.' They all shook their heads at me, smiling, and seemed a little embarrassed. I perceived they felt that English food was so far inferior to German that my opinion on the subject could not be worth having, and that I was rather simple and ingenuous not to realize this. 'I understand,' ventured my husband, 'that there are very good trout.' 'Ach, no!' laughed the manufacturer, waving his great hand. 'They call them trout, but they are something quite different; they are not like our good German trout.'

They all sat, nodding and rocking, entranced by a vision of the warm goodness of German life, the warm goodness of German food, and of German superiority to all non-German barbarity.

A little while later my husband and I went to the restaurant car and had dinner, which was Yugoslavian and extremely good. When we came back the business man was telling how, sitting at his desk in his office just after the war, he had seen the bodies of three men fall past his windows — Spartacist snipers who had been on his roof and had been picked off by Government troops; how he had been ruined in the inflation, and had even sold his dog for food; how he had made a fortune again, by refinancing of a prosperous industry, but had never enjoyed it because he had always been afraid of Bolshevism, and had worried himself ill finding the best ways of tying it up safely; and how he had spent the last twenty-three years in a state of continuous terror. He had been afraid of the Allies; he had been afraid of the Spartacists; he had been afraid of financial catastrophe; he had been afraid of the Communists; and now he was afraid of the Nazis.

Sighing deeply, he said, evidently referring to something about which he had not spoken, 'The worst of life under the Nazis is that the private citizen hasn't any liberty, but the officials haven't any authority either.' It was curious that such a sharply critical phrase should have been coined by one whose attitude was so purely passive; for he had spoken of all the forces that had tormented him as if they could not have been opposed, any more than thunder or lightning. He seemed, indeed, quite unpolitically-minded.

Just then I happened to see the name of a station at which we were stopping; and I asked my husband to look it up in a timetable he had in his pocket, so that we might know how late we were. It turned out that we were very late indeed, nearly two hours. When my husband

spoke of this all the Germans showed the greatest consternation. They realized that this meant they would almost certainly get into Zagreb too late to catch the connection which would take them the twelve hours' journey to Split, on the Dalmatian coast, and in that case they would have to spend the night at Zagreb.

I realized again that I should never understand the German people. The misery of these travelers was purely amazing. It was perplexing that they should have been surprised by the lateness of the train. The journey from Berlin to Zagreb is something like thirty hours, and no sensible person would expect a minor train to be on time on such a route in winter, particularly as a great part of it runs through the mountains. It also seemed to me odd that the business man's wife should take it as an unforeseen horror that her husband, who had been seriously ill and was not yet recovered, should be tired after sitting up in a railway carriage for a day and a night. Also, if she had such an appetite, why had she not brought a tin of biscuits and some ham? And how was it that these two men, who had successfully conducted commercial and industrial enterprises of some importance, were so utterly incompetent in the conduct of a simple journey?

As I watched them in complete mystification, yet another consideration came to horrify them. 'And what the hotels in Zagreb will be like!' said the manufacturer. 'Pigsties! Pigsties!' 'Oh, my poor husband!' moaned the business man's wife. 'To think he is to be uncomfortable when he is so ill!' I objected that the hotels in Zagreb were excellent; that I myself had stayed in an old-fashioned hotel which was extremely comfortable, and that there was a new and huge hotel that was positively American in its luxury. But they would not listen to me.

'But why are you going to Yugoslavia if you think it is all so terrible?' I

asked. 'Ah,' said the manufacturer, 'we are going to the Adriatic Coast, where there are many German tourists and for that reason the hotels are good.'

I got up and went out into the corridor. It was disconcerting to be rushing through the night with this carriageful of unhappy muddlers, who were so nice and so incomprehensible, and apparently doomed to disaster of a kind so special that it was impossible for anybody not of their blood to imagine how it could be averted. Their helplessness was the greater because they had plainly a special talent for obedience. In the routine level of commerce and industry they must have known a success which must have made their failure in all other phases of their being embittering and strange. Now that capitalism was passing into a decadent phase, and many of the grooves along which they had rolled so happily were worn down to nothing, they were broken and beaten, and their ability to choose the broad outlines of their daily lives, to make political decisions, was now less than it had been originally. It was inevitable that the children of such muddlers, who would themselves be muddlers, would support any system which offered them new opportunities for profitable obedience, which would pattern society with new grooves in place of the old, and would never be warned by any instinct of competence and self-preservation if that system was leading to universal disaster. I tried to tell myself that these people in the carriage were not of importance, and were not typical, but I knew that I lied. These were exactly like all Aryan Germans I had ever known; and there were sixty millions of them in the middle of Europe.

'This is Zagreb!' cried the Germans, and began taking all their luggage down from the racks.

VI

They were waiting in the rain on the platform of Zagreb, our three friends.

There was Constantine, the poet, a Serb — that is to say, a Slav member of the Orthodox Church, from Serbia. There was Valetta, a lecturer in mathematics at Zagreb University, a Croat — that is to say, a Slav member of the Roman Catholic Church, from Dalmatia. There was Marko Gregorievich, the critic and journalist, a Croat from Croatia. They were all different sizes and shapes, in body and mind.

Constantine is short and fat, with a head like the best-known Satyr in the Louvre, and an air of vine leaves about the brow, though he drinks little. He is perpetually drunk on what comes out of his mouth, not what goes into it. He talks incessantly. In the morning he emerges from his bedroom in the middle of a sentence; and at night he backs into it, so that he can just finish one more sentence. Automatically he makes silencing gestures while he speaks, just in case somebody should take it into his head to interrupt. Nearly all his talk is good, and sometimes it runs along in a colored shadow show like Heine's *Florientine Nights*, and sometimes it crystallizes into a little story the essence of hope or love or regret, like a Heine lyric. Of all human beings I have ever met he is the most like Heine; and since Heine was the most Jewish of writers it follows that Constantine is Jew as well as Serb. His father was a Jewish doctor of revolutionary sympathies, who fled from Russian Poland about fifty years ago and settled in a rich provincial town in Serbia and became one of the leaders of the medical profession, which has always been more advanced there than one might have supposed. His mother was also a Polish Jewess, and was a famous musician.

He is by adoption only, yet completely, a Serb. He fought in the Great War very gallantly, for he is a man of great physical courage, and to him Serbian history is his history, his life is a part of the life of the Serbian people. He is now a Government official; but that is not the reason why he believes in Yugoslavia. To him a

state of Serbs, Slovenes, and Croats, controlled by a central government in Belgrade, is a necessity if these people are to maintain themselves against Italian and Central European pressure on the west, and Bulgarian pressure, which might become in effect Central European pressure, in the east.

Valetta comes from a Dalmatian town which was settled by the Greeks some hundreds of years before Christ, and he has the strong delicacy and the morning freshness of an archaic statue. They like him everywhere he goes, Paris and London and Berlin and Vienna, but he is hallmarked as a Slav, because his charm is not associated with any of those defects that commonly go with it in other races. He might suddenly stop smiling and clench his long hands, and offer himself up to martyrdom for an idea. He is anti-Yugoslavian; he is a federalist and believes in an autonomous Croatia.

Gregorievich looks like Pluto in the Mickey Mouse films. His face is grooved with grief at the trouble and lack of gratitude he has encountered while defending certain fixed and noble standards in a chaotic world. His long body is like Pluto's in its extensibility. As he sits in his armchair, resentment at what he conceives to be a remediable injustice will draw him inches nearer to the ceiling, despair at an inevitable wrong will crumple him up like a concertina. Yugoslavia is the Mickey Mouse this Pluto serves. He is ten years older than Constantine, who is forty-six, and thirty years older than Valetta. This means that for sixteen years before the war he was an active revolutionary, fighting against the Hungarians for the right of Croats to govern themselves and to use their own language. In order that the Croats might be united with their free brother Slavs, the Serbs, he endured poverty and imprisonment and exile. Therefore Yugoslavia is to him the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Who speaks more lightly of it spits on those sixteen

years of sorrow; who raises his hand against it violates the Slav sacrament. So to him Constantine, who was still a student in Paris when the Great War broke out, and who had been born a free Serb, seems impious in the way he takes Yugoslavia for granted. There is the difference between them that there was between the Christians of the first three centuries, who fought for their faith when it seemed a lost cause, and the Christians of the fourth century who fought for it when it was victorious.

And, to Gregorievich, Valetta is quite simply a traitor. He is more than an individual who has gone astray — he is the very essence of treachery incarnate. Youth should uphold the banner of the right against unjust authority, and should practise that form of obedience to God which is rebellion against tyranny; and it seems to Gregorievich that Valetta is betraying that ideal, for to him Yugoslavia represents a supreme gesture of defiance against the tyranny of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Only a sorcerer could make him realize that the Austro-Hungarian Empire ceased to be when Valetta was six years old, and that he has never known any other symbol of unjust authority except Yugoslavia.

They are standing in the rain, and they are all different and they are all the same. They greet us warmly, and in their hearts they cannot greet each other, and they dislike us a little because it is to meet us that they are standing beside their enemies in the rain. We are their friends, but we are made from another substance. The rich passions of Constantine, the intense, graceful, selected joys and sorrows of Valetta, and Gregorievich's gloomy Great Danish nobility, are all cut from the same primary stuff, though in very dissimilar shapes. Sitting in our hotel room, drinking wine, they show their unity of origin. A door opens — they twitch and swivel their heads, and the movement is the same. When these enemies advance on each

other, they must move at the same tempo.

My husband has not met any of them before. I see him transfixed by their strangeness. He listens amazed to Constantine's beautiful French, which has preserved in it all the butterfly brilliances of his youth, when he was one of Bergson's favorite students and was making his musical studies with Wanda Landowska. He falls under the spell of Constantine. He strains forward to catch the perfect phrase that is bound to come when Constantine's eyes catch the light, and each of his tight black curls spins on his head, and his lips shoot out horizontally, and his hands grope in the air before him as if he were unloosing the neckcloth of the strangling truth. Now Constantine was talking of Bergson and saying it was to miss the very essence in him to regard him only as a philosopher. He was a magician who had taken philosophy as his subject matter. He did not analyze phenomena, he uttered incantations that invoked understanding.

'We students,' said Constantine, 'we were not the pupils of a great professor; we were the sorcerer's apprentices. We did strange things that are not in most academic courses. On Sundays we would talk together in the forest of Fontainebleau, all day long sometimes, reconstituting his lectures by pooling our memories. For, you see, in his classroom it was not possible to take notes. If we bent our heads for one moment to take down a point, we missed an organic phrase, and the rest of the lecture appeared incomprehensible. That shows he was a magician. For what is the essential of a spell? That if one word is left out it is no longer a spell. I was able to recognize that at once, for in my town, which is Shabats, there were three houses in a row, and in one house lived my father who was the greatest doctor in our country, and in the next there lived a priest who was the greatest saint in my country, and in the next there lived an old woman who was the greatest witch in my country, and

when I was a little boy I lived in the first of these houses and I went as I would into the other two, for the holy man and the witch liked me very much; and I tell you in each of these houses there was magic, so I know all about it as most men do not.'

A line of light ran along the dark map of Europe we all of us hold in our minds; at one end a Serbian town, unknown to me as Ur, peopled with the personnel of fairy tales, and at the other end the familiar idea of Bergson. My husband, I could see, was enraptured. He loves to learn what he did not know before. But in a minute I could see that he was not so happy. Valetta had said that he was making plans for our pleasure in Yugoslavia, and he hoped that we should be able to go up into the snow mountains, particularly if we liked winter sports. My husband said he was very fond of Switzerland, and how he enjoyed going over there when he was tired and handing himself over to the care of the guides. 'Yes, the guides are so good for us, who are overcivilized,' said Constantine. 'They refresh us immensely, when we are with them. For they succeed at every point where we fail. We can be responsible for what we love, our families and our countries, and the causes we think just, but where we do not love we cannot muster the necessary attention. That is just what the guides do, with such a wealth of attention that it amounts to nothing comparable to our attention at all, to a mystical apprehension of the whole universe.

'I will give you,' he said, 'an example. I made once a most beautiful journey in Italy with my wife. She is a German, you know, and she worships Goethe, so this was a pilgrimage. We went to see where he had lived in Venice and Rome, and she was so delighted, you cannot believe — delighted deep in herself, so that her intuition told her many things. "That is the house where he lived!" she cried in Venice, jumping up and down in the gondola, and it was so. At length we

came to Naples, and we took a guide and went up Vesuvius, because Goethe went up Vesuvius. Do you remember the passage where he says he was on the edge of a little crater, and he slipped? That was much in my wife's mind, and suddenly it was given to her to know by intuition that a certain little crater we saw was that same one where Goethe had slipped, so before we could stop her she ran down to it. I saw, of course, that she might be killed at any moment, so I ran after her. But so did the guide, though she was nothing to him. And then came the evidence of this mystic apprehension which is given by the constant vigilance of a guide's life. Just then this crater began to erupt, and the lava burst out here and there. But always the guide knew where it was coming, and took us to the left or the right, wherever it was not. Sometimes there was barely time for us to be there for more than a second — that was proved afterwards because the soles of our shoes were scorched. For three quarters of an hour we ran thus up and down, from right to left and from left to right, before we could get to safety; and I was immensely happy the whole time because the guide was doing something I could not have done, which it is good to do!'

During the telling of this story my husband's eyes rested on me with an expression of alarm. It was apparent from Constantine's tone that nothing in the story had struck him as odd except the devotion of the guide to his charges. 'Are not her friends very dotty?' my husband was plainly asking himself. 'Is this how she wants to live?' But the conversation took a businesslike turn, and we were called on to consider our plans.

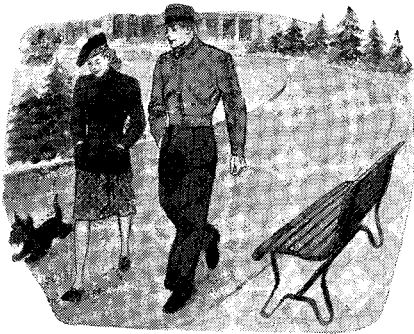
VII

In the morning Zagreb has the warm and comfortable appearance of a town that has been well-aired. People have been living there in physical, though not political, comfort for a thousand years.

"THE SUREST WAY OF PREVENTING Pneumonia..."

ACCORDING TO an eminent physician, "The surest way of preventing pneumonia is to eliminate the common cold and other respiratory infections."

This is because pneumonia rarely strikes out of a clear sky; usually it is preceded by a cold, influenza, or some other infection of the breathing passages.



*Daily exercise pays dividends in
pleasure and good health.*

How, then, can one guard against the dangerous cold?

... By keeping away from people who have colds and avoiding contact with crowds as much as possible. By getting daily outdoor exercise and keeping in good physical condition. By getting adequate rest and keeping properly clothed. By avoiding over-heated rooms. By eating properly—not over-eating—and being sure to get plenty of protective foods like green vegetables.

At the *first sign* of a cold, proper treatment should be started and kept up as long as the cold persists. If the cold becomes severe, the safest course is to go to bed and call your doctor.

Pneumonia strikes most frequently during the first three months of the year. So it is particularly important, during this period, for you to be on the lookout for pneumonia's most common warning symptoms such as:

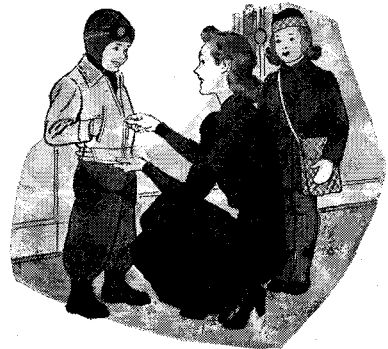
Sudden chill ... fever ... pain in side ...
cough ... thick, rust-colored sputum ...
hurried, somewhat labored breathing.

When any one or any combination of these symptoms is present, a doctor should be called *at once*.

For if the illness is pneumonia, he will then, while there is still time, have the best opportunity to use successfully the effective weapons of modern science.

Only a few years ago, the doctor was relatively helpless in the face of pneumonia. Today, he has means of more certain diagnosis ... including methods of determining more accurately the type of pneumonia. Furthermore there are highly effective serums and chemical agents to use separately, or in combination, in treating a particular case.

These new developments have been responsible for an amazing reduction, in the past three years, of about 50% in the death rate from pneumonia. But—most important—the doctor must have the chance to use his skill against pneumonia *early!*



*Proper clothing is important to the health
of the whole family.*

Metropolitan's free booklet, "Colds, Influenza, Pneumonia," contains many valuable, practical suggestions to help you ward off trouble at this time. Write today to Dept. 141-T.

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Moreover, it is full of those vast toast-colored buildings, barracks and law courts and municipal offices, which are an invariable sign of past occupancy by the Austro-Hungarian Empire; and that always means enthusiastic ingestion combined with lack of exercise in pleasant surroundings, the happy consumption of coffee and whipped cream and sweet cakes at little tables under chestnut trees. But it has its own quality. It has no grand river, it is built up to no climax; the hill the old town stands on is what the eighteenth century used to call 'a moderate elevation.' It has few very fine buildings except the Gothic Cathedral, and that has been forced to wear an ugly nineteenth-century overcoat. But Zagreb makes from its featureless handsomeness something that pleases like a Schubert song, a delight that begins quietly and never definitely ends.

We believed we were being annoyed by the rain that first morning we walked out into it, but eventually we recognized we were as happy as we have been walking in sunshine through really beautiful cities. It has, moreover, the endearing characteristic noticeable in many French towns, of remaining a small town when it is in fact quite large. A hundred and fifty thousand people live in Zagreb, but from the way gossips stand in the street it is plain that everybody knows who is going to have a baby and when. This is a lovely spiritual victory over urbanization.

We stopped in the public gardens in front of our hotel to look at Mestrovich's statue of Bishop Strossmayer, which stands in front of the Academy of Science and the Arts which he founded. This was, for me, a moment. I feel for him as others feel for Napoleon and Lord Byron — that time is a most inconvenient veil between us. Of all the great figures in the past I should prefer to see Strossmayer — not because of his genius, which was obviously not great, but because he seems the most definite promise we have yet received that man may produce

a superior variation to himself, and life may take an agreeable turn. I had wondered how Mestrovich, who likes handling rough strength, had dealt with Strossmayer's delicate beauty. It was interesting to see that the definiteness of that delicate beauty had simply taken the matter out of Mestrovich's hands. He had simply reproduced it, and had veiled it with a sense of power, setting hours in the thick wavy hair, after the manner of Michael Angelo's Moses.

I should like to know if Mestrovich ever saw his model; he most probably did, for Strossmayer lived until he was ninety, in the year 1905. He had then completed fifty-six years of continuous heroic agitation for the liberation of the Croats and as the fearless denunciator of Austro-Hungarian tyranny. Because of his brilliant performances as a preacher and a scholar, he was at thirty-four made the Bishop of Djakovo, a see which included a vast stretch of the Slav-inhabited territory of the Empire; and he immediately declared himself a passionate pro-Croat. It is an indication of the wrongs suffered by the Slavs that the revenues of this bishopric were enormous, though the poverty and ignorance of the peasants were so extreme they shocked and actually frightened travelers. He amazed everyone by spending these enormous revenues on the interests of the Croats.

While Hungary was trying to Magyarize the Croats by forbidding them to use their own language, and as far as possible depriving them of all but the most elementary education, he financed a number of secondary schools and seminaries for clerics, where the instruction was given in Serbo-Croat; he endowed many South Slav literary men and philologists, both Croats and Serbs; and, what was most important, he insisted on the rights of the Croats and the Slovenes to use the Slav liturgy instead of the Latin. This last was their ancient privilege, for which they had bargained with Rome at the time of their conver-

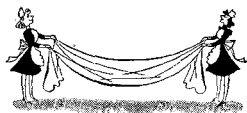
Pick a word

—one word



IF WORDS were rationed, and we had to pick just one word to define life at the St. Regis, we'd pick the word "DELIGHTFUL."

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Great White Fleet

sion by Cyril and Methodius in the ninth century, when they were a free people. He founded the University of Zagreb, which was necessary not only for educational reasons, but to give the Croats a proper social status; for in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, as in Germany and in the United States, graduation at a university has a class value — it is the mental equivalent of a white collar. Since the Croats had a university, they could not be despised as peasants. He was able to raise pro-Slav feeling in the rest of Europe, for he was the friend of many distinguished Frenchmen, and he was the admired correspondent of Lord Acton and Mr. Gladstone.

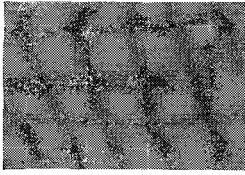
In all this lifelong struggle he had the support of no authority. He stood alone. Though Pope Leo XIII liked and admired him, the Ultramontane Party, which wanted to dye the Church in the Italian colors, loathed him because he was one of the three dissentients who voted against the Doctrine of Papal Infallibility. On this matter he was of the same mind as Lord Acton. They also hated him because he defended the rights of the Slavs to their liturgy. When he sent a telegram of brotherly greetings to the head of the Orthodox Church in Russia on the occasion of the millenary of the Slav Apostle Methodius, his fellow Catholics, particularly the Hungarians, raged against this as an insult to the Holy See. The sense of being part of a universal brotherhood, of being sure of finding a family welcome in the farthest land, is one of the sweetest benefits offered by the Roman Catholic Church to its members. He had none of it. He had only to leave his diocese to meet coldness and insolence from his fellow Catholics.

The Austro-Hungarian Empire could not persecute Strossmayer to his danger. The Croats loved him too well, and it was not safe to have a belt of disaffected Slavs on the border of Serbia, the free Slav state. But it nagged at him incessantly. When he went to open the

Slav Academy in Zagreb the streets were thronged with cheering crowds, but the Government forbade all decorations or illuminations. It took him fifteen years to force on Vienna the University of Zagreb; the statutes were not sanctioned till five years after the necessary funds had been collected. During the negotiations which settled the terms on which Croatia was to submit to Hungary, after Hungary had been given a new status by Elizabeth's invention of the Dual Monarchy, Strossmayer was exiled to France. At the height of the trouble over his telegram to the Orthodox Church about Methodius, he was summoned to a district of Hungary where the Emperor Franz Josef was attending manoeuvres; and Franz Josef took the opportunity to insult him publicly, though he was then seventy years of age.

This was a bitter blow to him, for he loved Austria, and indeed was himself of Austrian stock, and he wished to preserve the Austro-Hungarian Empire by making the Croats loyal and contented instead of rebels who had the right on their side. Again and again he warned the Emperor of the exact point at which his power was going to disintegrate: of Sarajevo. He told him that if the Austrians and Hungarians misgoverned Bosnia they would increase the mass of Slav discontent within the Empire to a weight that no administration could support, and the Hapsburg power must fall.

But what is marvelous about this career is not only its heroism, but its gayety. Strossmayer was a child of light, exempt from darkness and terror. In person he resembled the slim, long-limbed, and curled Romeo in Delacroix's 'Romeo and Juliet,' and the Juliet he embraced was all grace. The accounts given by European celebrities of the visits they had to him read richly. The foreigner arrived after a night journey at a small station, far on the thither side of civilization, and was received by a young priest followed by a servant de-



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scribed as 'a pandour with long moustachios dressed in the uniform of a hussar,' who put him into a victoria drawn by four dappled greys of the Lipizahlen strain which is still to be seen in the Spanish Riding School at Vienna. Twenty-two miles they did in two hours and a half, and at the end, by a small market town, was a true palace. It was nineteenth-century-made, and that was unfortunate, particularly in these parts. There is a theory that the decay of taste is somehow linked with the growth of democracy, but it is completely disproved by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which in its last eighty years grew in fervor for absolutism and for Messrs. Maple of Tottenham Court Road. But there was much worthy of any palace. There was a magnificent avenue of Italian poplars, planted by the Bishop in his young days; there was a superb park, landscaped by the Bishop himself; there were greenhouses and winter gardens, the like of which the eastward traveler would not see again until he had passed through Serbia and Bulgaria and Rumania and had found his way to the large estates in Russia. The guest breakfasted by an open window admitting the perfume of an acacia grove, on prodigious butter and cream from the home farm, on Viennese coffee and rolls made of flour sent from Budapest.

Later he was taken to worship in the Cathedral which the Bishop had built, where peasants proudly wearing Slav costumes were hearing the Slav liturgy. Then there was the return to the palace, and a view of the picture gallery, hung with works of art which Strossmayer had collected in preparation of the Museum at Zagreb. It is an endearing touch that he confessed he was extremely glad of the Imperial opposition which had delayed the foundation of this Museum, so that he had an excuse for keeping these pictures in his own home. After an excellent midday dinner the Bishop exhibited his collection of gold and silver crucifixes

and chalices of Slav workmanship, dating from the tenth to the fourteenth century, pointing out the high level of civilization which they betokened. Then the Bishop would take the visitor round his home farm, to see the Lipizahlen horses he bred very profitably for the market, the Swiss cattle he had imported to improve the local stock, and the model dairy which was used for instructional purposes; and he would walk with him in his deer park, at one corner of which he had saved from the axes of the woodcutters a tract of the primeval Balkan forest, within a palisade, erected to keep out the wolves which still ravaged that part of the world. Before supper the visitor took a little rest. The Bishop sent up to him a few reviews and newspapers, the *Times*, the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, the *Journal des Économistes*, *La Nuova Antologia*, and so on.

After supper, at which the food and drink were again delicious, there were hours of conversation, exquisite in manner, stirring in matter. Strossmayer spoke perfect German, Italian, Czech, Russian, and Serbian, and a peculiarly musical French which bewitched the ears of Frenchmen; but it was in Latin that he was most articulate. It was his favorite medium of expression, and all those who heard him use it, even when they were such scholars as the Vatican Council, were amazed by the loveliness he extracted from that not so very sensuous language. About his conversation there seems to have been the clear beauty of the first Latin hymns. The Christians and he alike were possessed by an ardor which was the very quality needed to transcend the peculiar limitations of that tongue. It was an ardor which, in the case of Strossmayer, led to a glorious, unflinching charity towards events. He spoke of his beloved Croats, of the victories of their cause, of his friendships with great men, as a lark might sing in mid-air; but of his struggles with Rome and the Hapsburgs he spoke with equal joy, as a triumphant athlete might recall his most

The Atlantic Announces

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1940 - 1941

The Atlantic contests are planned as an educational feature — to stimulate beginners to put their writing into as finished form as possible, and to encourage good writing by prize awards.

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\$50 for the Best Essay

\$50 for the Best Story

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The contests are open to all students registered on our list as using the *Atlantic* in a course during any part of the 1940-1941 college year. Send for circular.

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**BREAD LOAF
SCHOOL OF
ENGLISH
offers TWO
SCHOLARSHIPS**

Free tuition for the 1941 session of the Bread Loaf School of English at Bread Loaf, Vermont: **one scholarship** to the student winning an Atlantic Prize for the Best Essay, or the Best Story, or the Best Poem in the 1940-1941 Atlantic Contests for College Students; **one scholarship** to the instructor of that student.

**SUMMER
INSTITUTE
FOR SOCIAL
PROGRESS
AT WELLESLEY
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offers THREE
SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Summer Institute for Social Progress at Wellesley College, Massachusetts, in coöperation with the *Atlantic Monthly*, offers three scholarships for the session of the Institute, July, 1941:

One scholarship, including tuition, board, and room, to the student writing the best essay in the Atlantic College Essay Contest on the theme of the conference (subject to be announced), or on some related topic in the field of economics or political science.

One scholarship, covering tuition, to the instructor of the student whose essay wins the above award.

One scholarship, including tuition, board, and room, for the best essay on "Democratic Procedures I Use in Teaching," by a college, high school, or private school instructor on the Atlantic School List who has used the Atlantic in a course during some part of the 1940-1941 school term.

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famous contests. His visitors, who had traveled far to reassure him in his precarious position, went home in a state of reassurance such as they had never known before.

This is not a character in life as we know it; it belongs to the world that hangs before us just so long as the notes of a Mozart aria linger in the ear. According to our dingy habit, which is necessary enough considering our human condition, we regard him with suspicion, we look for the snake beneath the flower. All of us know what it is to be moonstruck by charmers and to misinterpret their charm as a promise that now at last, in this enchanting company, life can be lived without precaution, in the laughing exchange of generousities; and all of us have found later that that charm made no promise and meant nothing, absolutely nothing, except perhaps that their mothers' glands worked very well before they were born. Actually such men often cannot understand generosity at all, since the eupeptic quality which is the cause of their charm enables them to live happily without feeling the need for sweetening life by amiable conduct. They often refrain from contemptuous comment on such folly because they have some use for the gifts of the generous, but even then they usually cannot contain their scorn at what seems a crazy looseness, an idiot interference with the efficient mechanism of self-interest. Hence the biographies of charmers are often punctuated by treachery and brutality of a most painful kind. So we wait for the dark passages in Strossmayer's story. But they do not come.

It appears that he turned on the spiritual world the same joyous sensuality with which he chose chalices, Italian pic-

tures, horses, cattle, coffee, and flowers. He rejected brutality as if it were a spavined horse, treachery as if it had been chicory in the coffee. His epicureanism did not fail under its last and supreme obligation, so much more difficult than the harshest vow of abstinence taken by ascetics; he preferred love to hate, and made sacrifices for that preference. The sole companions left to him were the Croats; for them he had forsaken all others. But he never hesitated to oppose the Croat leaders over certain errors tending to malice and persecution which sprung up here as they are bound to do in every movement of liberation. Though he risked everything to free the Croats from the dominance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, he would not suffer any attempt to raise a social hatred among the Slavs against the Austrians or the Hungarian peoples; nor did he ever let ill be spoken of the Emperor Franz Josef. Though he was a most fervent propagandist for the Roman Catholic faith, he would have nothing to do with the movement to persecute the Orthodox Church which set the Croat against the Serb. He also set himself a problem of enormous delicacy in his opposition to anti-Semitism, which was an inevitable growth here since the feudal system kept the peasants bound to the land and thereby gave the Jews a virtual monopoly of trade and the professions. For thirty-six years, smiling, he dared deny his friends all titbits to feed the beasts in their bosoms, and lived in peril of making them his enemies, though he loved friendship above all things.

'There was a life shaped by a sense of form,' said my husband, and we left the beautiful statue, smiling under the light rain, and went on to the market place.

(To be continued)

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